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Hafa Adai!

$1 Saipan Tribune

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Salas' body found; probe initiated

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The body of 65-year-old Juan Salas—a man who was reported missing since the evening of May 1—was found just a few hundred feet below the Suicide Cliff cliff line last Friday morning and an investigation into what happened has officially been initiated.

Last Friday, the search for Salas entered Day 2 with the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services finally able to repel down the Suicide Cliff cliff line. After just two repels, DFEMS located a body just a few hundred feet below which was later identified as Salas.

DFEMS spokesperson Rob Mojica, in a press conference last Friday, explained that

See SALAS on Page 4

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services team discusses their game plan for the second day of the search for missing person Juan Salas.

$5.2M transferred to Settlement Fund to pay retirees' 25% pension

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Palacios

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios confirmed yesterday that $5.2 million were transferred directly last week from the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority to the NMI Settlement Fund to pay the government retirees' 25%

See $5.2M on Page 4

Marianas March Against Cancer returns after 5 years

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

Showcasing their support, love, and spirit of camaraderie, hundreds of community members gathered for the 2024 Marianas March Against Cancer last Friday night at the CPA Airport field.

A total of 17 teams—a mix

See CANCER on Page 4

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Many paid their respects to those who are battling cancer or those who have passed away in the fight against cancer by lighting over 3,000 luminaries during the 2024 Marianas March Against Cancer last Friday night at the CPA Airport field.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Team Hope members share a smile just before taking on the makeshift track at the 2024 Marianas March Against Cancer last Friday night at the CPA Airport field.

'EVS-TAP could hamper return of China market'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The CNMI Economic Vitality & Security Travel Authorization Program, or EVS-TAP, which was initially seen as a saving grace for the CNMI's tourism industry, may now hamper the return of the China market which was supposed to be forthcoming with the return of Hong Kong Airlines.

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INSIDE

LOCAL

Guam National Guard troops hailing from the neighboring Northern Mariana Islands have increased 2,400% from three in 2022 to 75 in 2024.

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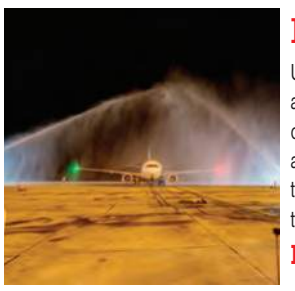

BUSINESS

United Airlines launched the much-anticipated Tokyo/Haneda to Guam service on May 1, 2024, with gate events in Tokyo and Guam to celebrate with passengers traveling on the inaugural flight between the two locations.

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LIFE & STYLE

"Star Wars" actor Mark Hamill dropped by the White House on Friday for a visit with President Joe Biden and walked away with a pair of the president's aviator sunglasses and a greater respect for the office.

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Local

May is Mental Health Awareness, National Adolescent Health Month

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

May is all about community awareness, decreasing stigma, and showing support for those who may suffer from mental health and a reminder that they are not alone.

To this end, acting governor David M. Apatang designated the month of May as Mental Health Awareness Month and National Adolescent Health Month last Thursday at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

Joining Apatang in the proclamation were Education Commissioner Dr. Lawrence Camacho along with Public School System officials and students and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Esther Muna along with other staff from CHCC, Community Guidance Center, and Haligi Aware program.

The proclamation itself highlighted that not only is mental health an issue in the community, but it also has quite an effect on the young generation, noting a 2021 CNMI Youth Risk Behavior Survey which showed that 35.6% of middle school youth and 26.9% of high school youth have seriously considered suicide, with 14.7% middle school and 17.6% high school students actually attempting the suicide.

"For many of us, especially those navigating the circular waters of high school, mental health is still an issue. Something that happens to others, or something we're told to ignore and put your own. But the truth is, mental health is just as important as physical health, if not more so," said Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Jr./Sr. High School student Jacey Charfauros.

She added, "It affects how we think, feel, and act, changing our experiences and relationships in profound ways. From the pressures of academics to the complexity of social dynamics, high school can be a breeding ground for stress, anxiety, and depression. As a student, I experienced first-hand the toll that depression can take on our mental well-being. We're expected to excel in our studies, excel in extracurricular activities, and excel in our social life, all while navigating the tough journey of adolescence. It's no wonder that so many of us struggle to keep our heads above water. But here's the thing, it's okay to not be okay. It's okay to feel overwhelmed, anxious, or depressed. What's not okay is suffering in silence, pretending that everything is fine, when it's not."

Charfauros urged the community to create a culture of openness and understanding.

"There is help and support available, whether it's through friends, family, teachers, or mental health professionals. By picking up and seeking help when we need it, we can break the cycle of violence and stigma surrounding mental illness. To the adults here today, I urge you to lead by example when it comes to mental health…Your actions and attitude toward mental health can have a profound impact on the young people in your life. Let's create an environment where mental health is prioritized and supported not swept under the rug or dismissed as insignificant. By showing compassion understanding and empathy you can create a safer and more nurturing environment for all of us," she said,

Charfauros also reminded everyone that, "Together we can break down barriers that prevent so many from seeking help… together we can make a difference."

Apatang in his address said that depression and mental illness affects anyone,

"Depression can happen to anyone at any age. As we become older, we face new social relationships, new pressures from academic, athletic, and other activities. Many of us may not know how to cope with all these overwhelming emotions, which could lead to many factors in our struggles with mental health."

He shared that whether from one age spectrum to another, "Living with mental illnesses is not easy, but finding the meaning in life, and gaining the feeling of being valued, will give us the strength to drive through any mental health struggles. As part of the older generation, it is my duty, or our duty, to help our youth grow, and help them become a force to be reckoned with. If we are mentally healthy, we can lead a positive quality of life. And that's for all of us."

Camacho stated, "It's great to hear from the students' perspective as a call for action. And we as a community need to heed to that call for action and actually do something about it…Each of us have our whys or inner whys of why we do what we do and why we're here present today. And I can just say to look from within because every one individual on this planet has his or her own inner demon that sometimes can be part of the problem."

He then added, "But then if we create an environment around each other, we create a healthier environment so that our inner demons don't come up to the point where now we're needing some help. As a community, we need to thrive together. But then when there's help that is needed by any one of our team members in the community, in this society, we all need to also get up and take up to bat the role of being a responsible citizen to help the community. Within all these agencies, I think we all have the right agencies. So that the support is there. We just need to make sure that we guide the individuals in that direction."

Sharing her gratitude to her CHCC team, Muna said, "We have public health and mental health. And that's the approach that we want to take moving forward, is that mental health is public health. It's a concern of all of us to make sure that we have the education, the outreach, for services for all of you. Don't feel like just confined within your walls and that's all the people that you can reach out to. We are here. So again, I really appreciate the recognition of this month. But it shouldn't be just this month. All of us should think about mental health as a problem throughout our lives. And from children to adulthood, we all experience it the same way too. We always feel like we're blocked and everything. But again, there's always somebody there and we're definitely here to support you all."

The CHCC-CGC suicide prevention program is available Monday-Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm, and can be reached at:

- (670) 664-LIFE (5433)
- (670) 664-LIVE (5483)

If you or someone you know needs immediate assistance, especially if you believe someone's life is in danger, call 911. You can also call the National Suicide prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255, which provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress.

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OAG's Nelson sworn in to CNMI Bar Association

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

Office of the Attorney General Civil Division chief Alison Michelle Nelson was sworn into the CNMI Bar Association last Wednesday at the Guma Hustisia in Susupe.

Nelson's swearing in was during a special court session that also awarded winners of the Judiciary's Voice of Democracy art and essay competition in celebration of National Law Week, Law Day and the CNMI Judiciary's 35th anniversary.

Her oath of attorney was followed by the signing of the official roll of attorney's book and a certificate presentation.

Nelson received her juris doctorate from the Northwestern School of Law of Lewis & Clark College. She received her B.A. degree from Whitman College.

Nelson told *Saipan Tribune* that after falling in love with the community on Saipan, she not only looks forward to serve in court, but also wants to spend more years on the island.

"I started working for the Office of the Attorney General in July of 2020, under a limited governmental attorney admission, which allowed me to practice for up to four years. And the court has recently changed the rule to allow for an extension of up to four more years, but my family intends to stay here indefinitely, and so I wanted to take part so we could stay long-term."

Nelson shared that she has been the Civil Division chief for about two years now and oversees litigation by assigning civil cases to other government attorneys. She also currently represents the Department of Public Lands.

"Most of the litigation that involves the Department of Public Lands I handle that personally. I've been working with the executive director of the Commonwealth Casino Commission on the revocation proceedings for [Imperial Pacific International's] license, so it's been busy."

Nelson said she's very excited about the future and looks forward to continue serving the island community.

"I love the community and the people and I feel like we are able to just do a lot through the Office of the Attorney General for the good of the Commonwealth. I feel like this gives me an opportunity to contribute. And as far as my family is concerned, we just feel like it's such a welcoming community, and my son's loving his school, my husband is at the hospital and enjoying his job there, so we just feel like it's a great fit for our family and we want to stay," she said.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Alison Michelle Nelson, center, smiles for the camera while posing with her peers after she was sworn in as member of the CNMI Bar Association last Wednesday at the Guma Hustisia in Susupe.

Humanities Council elects new board leadership

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council board of directors elected a new slate of officers during its quarterly meeting on April 27, 2024. Gretchen "Gin" A. Smith will serve as chairperson, Dr. Bobby James A. Cruz as vice chairperson, and Lynette L. Villagomez as secretary/treasurer.

The council is affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities and was founded in 1991 as a CNMI non-profit to support a broad range of humanistic activities through awards of funds for projects, programs, exhibits, conferences, or other activities that support the understanding, growth, development and appreciation of the humanities. Its mission today is to navigate the human experiences of the indigenous and diverse people of the Commonwealth by enhancing their lives through research, publications, dialogue, and programs.

Smith became a member of the board in October 2021 and served as its program committee chairperson since April 2023.

"Gin has been an important advocate for improving the quality and reach of our programs in the community," said Leo Pangelinan, the council's executive director. "Her efforts in stewarding changes to the eligibility criteria, application guidelines, and review processes for our Community Grant Program, for example, has yielded an unusually high number of individuals and groups seeking funding support for humanities projects in the CNMI." Having served on the board as its vice chair for two consecutive terms, Smith is equipped to navigate the council toward its goals and evaluate options for shifting into new directions as its current five-year strategic plan expires in 2025. "I hope to ensure a place for the humanities across generations and cultures by directing a spotlight on the council's programs and harnessing the ideas of untapped communities," said Smith.

Cruz was elected to the board in February 2021 and will assume his new role as board vice chairperson after serving two consecutive terms as the board's chairperson. He expressed his complete trust in Smith, stating, "Gin has been my second in command for a number of years and has helped the council leadership and staff reach higher levels of success. I have complete faith in her push for greater voice and visibility for all in the humanities and will support her as she supported me."

Villagomez was elected to the board in April 2022 and will continue as the strategic planning and evaluation committee chairperson while she assumes her new role as board secretary/treasurer. ***(PR)***

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Attao says Hyatt's closure not a new situation

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (Ind-Saipan) said on Thursday that the impending closure of Hyatt Regency Saipan is not a new situation as this is not the first time the CNMI is facing this kind of problem.

Attao said during the House of Representatives special session that nobody was crying foul when Mariana Resort & Spa, Plumeria Resort, and La Fiesta Mall closed down.

Some House members also expressed their views on Hyatt's announcement last week that it will close at the end of June 2024 due to the challenging circumstances in the CNMI's tourism industry.

Attao said the CNMI was collecting bigger amounts of monies back then, but still weren't able to afford the functions of the government.

"Just one thing that's for sure, the situation is not new.

» Other House members also express their view on Hyatt's impending closure

The problem is not new," he pointed out.

Attao said the bigger impact was COVID-19 pandemic and in that period, monies were just being thrown around left and right.

"And we used it the way they were throwing it to the CNMI," he said.

Attao said he believes the CNMI can still survive this Hyatt closure's impact.

He said the CNMI thanks Hyatt for all the years they've invested to the CNMI.

Attao said the CNMI has no control of external affects that led to Hyatt's impending closure.

"We're still surviving," he said, adding that the CNMI will still find other ways to move forward from Hyatt.

Attao pointed out that there's also a contractual agreement between Hyatt and Department of Public Lands.

He said there's going to be penalties for breaching that contract and then there's opportunities with that contract. "If there's any hotel regarded as sweetest deal on a land lease it's Hyatt along with Crowne," Attao said.

He said there was a potential investor seeking the property in Hyatt and maybe CNMI can go back to that potential investor.

Attao said he is sure there are other new investors interested on that Hyatt property.

"COVID is past. People want to travel. People want to spend their money. They want to go to different places. We just need to reinvent ourselves, just like our ancestors did over the years after all the colonization. We can do this," he said.

Attao underscored the need for the CNMI to work together to make sure that they come up with solutions that everybody's going to benefit.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

SALAS

From page 1

DFEMS personnel were unable to repel down on the first day of the search last May 2 due to poor weather conditions. However, on Friday morning, weather conditions improved and after just two repels, at around 9:17am DFEMS located Salas.

"With our role in the search, we were initially going to repel down Suicide Cliff on Wednesday but due to the wind, we didn't want the guys to go down and get stuck or have something worse happen. So, the first day of searching, we had four teams push out from Suicide Cliff toward the HOPE Center. We scattered about 500 to 600 meters on foot. [On Friday] when weather conditions permitted, we managed to do two repels down the right side of Suicide Cliff, made our way around it hiking about 80 meters. The second repel we did, we managed to find the individual. We found him about 200 to 300 feet below the cliff line so just in the middle of the front of the cliff. There are no trails in that area, we had to repel to get to where he was at," he said.

Acting Department of Public Safety commissioner Anthony Macaranas, during the press conference, shared that as of last Friday, DPS' Criminal Investigative Bureau has launched an investigation into the incident.

"The case is still under investigation. But when there is a cause of death determination, we will be giving updates. CIB is actively investigating the case as we speak. It's too early to divulge any information. I don't know how long he was there for, but that's information we can get at a later time. As far as injuries, the only injuries identified are injuries related to a fall. As far as anything else, that will be determined if further forensic autopsy is done," he said.

Salas was reported missing on the evening of Wednesday, May 1.

"Family members were concerned because when Salas' wife returned home at around 4:30pm that day, she said she couldn't find him at home and could not contact him," Macaranas said.

Because the family was concerned, they initiated their own search and went around the island looking for Salas.

At around 6pm that night, they found Salas' car parked at Suicide Cliff at around 6pm. They made an official missing person report at around 7pm.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CANCER

From page 1

of government, private sector, schools, and families—joined the event and at the center of the makeshift track over 3,000 luminaries were lit and placed to honor those who are battling cancer and in memory of those who have passed away in the fight against cancer.

"The teams, they're amazing. And then the field, just to have a full circle of full luminaries—that's 3,000-plus luminarias in honor and in memory. So that's another highlight of the event. Just to celebrate those who are still battling this disease and those who have already passed but not forgotten. We are trying to make a difference and ensure the community that those battling cancer in silence because they don't have the right resource or awareness to know that MMAC is available. MMAC is here. MMAC is about spreading awareness," said 2024 MMAC chair Jenypy Sambile.

She then thanked everyone who made the 2024 edition of the MMAC a success.

"We had a total of 130 confirmed survivors as of last week when we had a survivor pre-dinner for the event. Then just two days ago, there were an additional 40 new registrants to the Commonwealth Cancer Association. So, I believe that Marianas March Against Cancer, or MMAC, is one of the largest, if not the only large fundraiser for cancer in the CNMI. And the great thing about this is the money we fundraise, it stays within the CNMI, and it's used within the CNMI for our patients here."

The night's fundraising event was the first since 2019 and Sambile said one of the main reasons for the hiatus after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 was that they didn't want to endanger patients to the virus since they were the most susceptible. Now with the CNMI almost completely clear of the virus, they were happy to restart the fundraiser.

"It's great to have this come back after the pandemic. Today's turnout is amazing. I can say maybe like a thousand-plus community members out here so I'm very, very pleased with the turnout. It's really one community, one journey and I'm really happy that we have these government agencies that came out to really help us push forward to make this event happen tonight. I'm really happy to see that our survivors are very happy as well."

After running her laps, Chantilly Kaipat from Team Selepeo Strong, shared that for her, this was about supporting family.

"I think it really shows family really got us through everything. There's probably almost 50 of us tonight. Most of us will be running and we want to let our survivors take it easy, relax, and see not only everyone, but the great support system that came out for them tonight."

Originally Team Selepeo Strong wanted to join MMAC in 2020 but it got canceled due to COVID-19.

"This is our first year and the turnout is really great and we hope to do this in the years to come," said Kaipat.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

$5.2M

From page 1

voluntary pension through the end of the fiscal year.

Palacios also confirmed in a statement that the Department of Finance ensured there was no lapse in payment of the voluntary 25% pension benefit.

The governor said DOF made the decision to have funds go directly to the Settlement Fund to assure retirees that funds will be used for its intended purpose.

"The administration has been unwavering in its commitment to continue the 25% payments to the retirees despite the fiscal challenges that we face as a Commonwealth," Palacios said.

The governor said he and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang thanked the members of the Legislature for passing legislation that ensures the payments of the 25% pension continue.

Palacios said the retirees are some of the most valuable in the Commonwealth, and to many of them, the pension payment represents a lifeline, providing essential support for daily expenses, healthcare needs, and maintaining a decent and dignified standard of living.

"Although we have reached a solution for now, the challenge to sustain the payments past the end of the fiscal year continues," said Palacios, adding that he and Apatang will continue to work with the Legislature to help safeguard the retirees' benefits and give them the peace of mind and financial security they deserve.

Last April 11, then-acting governor Apatang signed into law Public Law No. 23-18, a bill that will appropriate $5.2 million of the dividends collected by the CEDA from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. for payment of the 25% pension benefits.

Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (Ind-Saipan) is the principal author of the legislation, House Bill No. 23-104, HD1, SD1.

MARKET

From page 1

Last week, Hong Kong Airlines and the CNMI celebrated the former's inaugural flight back to Saipan after a five-year hiatus.

The airline's return was seen as hope for the CNMI's tourism industry as it would provide tourists from the PROC a flight from the region directly to Saipan.

However, in an interview with Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Joe C. Guerrero, visa-free travel for tourists from the People's Republic of China traveling to Saipan on a Hong Kong Airlines flight might only possible until August as the implementation of the EVS-TAP would not apply to tourists from the PROC unless they are traveling on a direct flight from the PROC to Saipan.

"There is a demand in China to travel. The population is so large and they are traveling everywhere but the CNMI because we don't have direct flights. Hong Kong Airlines is a nice addition but then again, it's a drop in the bucket. Everything helps but that flight schedule will only be until August because EVS-TAP, when it is implemented in September, my understanding is that they will not allow tourists from PROC to travel to get a flight from Hong Kong to the CNMI. The EVS-TAP would only allow a direct flight from the PROOC and not through Hong Kong. So, the Hong Kong Airlines is a stop-gap strategy from now until when the EVS-TAP is implemented in September," Guerrero explained.

Guerrero said an exemption from the U.S.-China flight cap is the only viable option for the CNMI's tourism industry as this ensures the return of the China market.

"We hope by September, we have some indication of an exemption of the direct flights from China to the CNMI. I know Congressman Gregorio Kilili Sablan has met with U.S. Department of Transportation recently and are working hard to work with them to give us the exemption we had prior to COVID. We are hopeful but things are moving slow for many businesses, and we feel for them," he said.

Back in January, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security issued a ruling that paves the way to create the EVS-TAP.

The EVS-TAP would essentially allow visa-free travel for pre-screened travelers from China to the CNMI, much like the current discretionary parole program in place.

According to the interim final ruling issued recently, DHS amends its regulations to require persons intending to travel to the CNMI under the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program to submit Form I-736 electronically in advance of travel and receive an electronic travel authorization prior to boarding a flight to Guam or the CNMI.

Under the current visa waiver program regulations, a paper U.S. Customs and Border Protection Form I-736 is presented to Customs and Border Protection upon arrival.

This rule also establishes the EVS-TAP as a restricted sub-program of the G–CNMI VWP.

DHS notes that the program is being established based on recommendations pursuant to consultations between the United States and the CNMI under Section 902 of the Covenant to establish the CNMI in Political Union with the United States of America.

"Once implemented, the CNMI EVS-TAP will allow pre-screened nationals of the PROC to travel to the CNMI without a visa under specified conditions," DHS stated in its order.

The CNMI EVS-TAP was first proposed in 2019 and aims to enhance security measures while ensuring the orderly entry of PRC nationals for tourism purposes.

The proposed EVS-TAP program involves electronic screening, a maximum 14-day stay, and additional security measures for PROC nationals.

CNMI JROTC cadets conquer Golden Bear West Coast National Drill Meet

By C/CPT KIANI PANGELINAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Congratulations to Saipan Southern High School's and Tinian High School's Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps drill teams after the two schools demonstrated their dominance in drill and ceremony at the Golden Bear West Coast National Drill Meet at North High School in Torrance, California.

The SSHS and THS JROTC drill teams demonstrated not only their extraordinary skill but also their constant dedication and teamwork to come out on top overall. Their triumph establishes a standard of excellence for future generations and is a monument to these outstanding young cadets' skill, character, and discipline.

The SSHS and THS JROTC drill teams competed alongside 42 other high schools in the varsity division. The schools representing the CNMI did exceptionally well, bringing home seven trophies, including the Golden Bear West Coast National Champions Trophy, the first time the CNMI has won being named overall varsity champions. This year's success was great for the CNMI schools, demonstrating their competitive abilities in this prestigious national competition.

"This was an elite experience, to say the least. Out of three consecutive wins I've experienced, this year's win felt the most surreal! This was my second year commanding the Manta Ray Battalions Unarmed Exhibition Drill Team, and I could not have done it without all 14 of my cadets. I will confidently say that no regret ever crossed my mind throughout this trip, and this year's Golden Bear Season deserves its own book. Nonetheless, this experience was successful, and it felt so amazing being a part of this group representing the CNMI, a little spec on the globe, doing big things. CNMI, here is the gold!" said C/Maj. Malentino Amandus.

"Having the opportunity to be a part of the Golden Bear Competition is certainly a moment I will cherish for the rest of my life. Our cadets pushed through and gave their all, spending many hours practicing routines and inspection questions. It was definitely an honor for me to represent the CNMI, especially since this was my school's (Tinian High School) first time sending up a team for the armed drill category. I'll make sure to learn from this experience so that we can have the best chance of representing our home again for another year," said C/2LT Adriel Lenteja.

After enduring over 10 grueling months of relentless training and facing countless obstacles, these cadets' unwavering dedication, tireless effort, and perseverance have triumphed. Refusing to be held back by hardships, they have forged ahead with unwavering commitment, transforming challenges into stepping stones toward their ultimate victory.

The SSHS and THS JROTC drill teams are immensely grateful to their local supporters and devoted parents whose unwavering presence and boundless encouragement have been the cornerstone of their journey to triumph.

"Their unwavering belief in our potential has fueled our determination, leading us toward success. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to CNMI Education Commissioner Dr. Lawrence Camacho, Dr. Yvonne Pangelinan, Ramona Maritita, Saipan Southern High School principal Vince Dela Cruz, Jeffery Bacani, 1SG Joe King, CPT Joseph Santos, Shirley Cepeda, Tinian Jr. Sr. High School principal Elizabeth Perzinski, whose unwavering support and invaluable guidance have been instrumental in our achievements."

The Saipan Southern High School JROTC Drill Team cadets also expressed profound gratitude to their head of guidance, Army senior instructor CSM (Ret.) Richard Basa.

"With his unwavering belief in our potential and tireless encouragement, he has sculpted us into champions of perseverance and victory. We stand today as a testament to his unwavering dedication and commitment to our success."

"Competing in the 2024 Golden Bear Drill meet was an experience. We are very grateful to be selected to compete in the competition. Blood, sweat, and tears were all endured in our journey towards the competition. Our efforts paid off as a team representing the CNMI, and we brought the gold back home. I'm proud of both teams, Tinian and Saipan, who worked hard to win the competition as a whole. Seeing other schools, different JROTC branches, and diverse skills routines presented was amazing. We hope Team CNMI stays strong and continues to keep its reputation up! Congratulations to all! Hoaah!" said C/LTC Edward Tirona.

"As a senior cadet in the drill team, I'd say from four years of experience and competing as this is my third time competing in the Golden Bear competition. This being my last year, and for it to be the first time we swept the overall varsity division was so fulfilling," said C/LTC, Mechaella De Ramos.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Southern High School's and Tinian High School's Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps drill teams at the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport after their trip from Torrance, California.

"As we bid farewell to our senior cadets, who made up more than half of both Tinian and Saipan Southern high school drill teams, we embarked on a bittersweet journey of parting ways. Your departure marks the closing of one chapter and the opening of another, filled with infinite possibilities and new horizons. May you carry with you the valuable lessons learned and the cherished moments that have happened throughout this journey? Farewell to our dear senior cadets, and may your future endeavors be filled with success, fulfillment, and boundless joy. To our extraordinary drill team cadets, resounding congratulations on your triumph! Your achievement is not just a victory; it showcases your unwavering dedication and relentless pursuit of excellence. Mega hooah!" said the SSHS and THS JROTC drill teams.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA)
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NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a regular meeting is being called on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. in the CPA Conference Room located on the second floor of the Captain George Fleming Building at the Port of Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda
D. Adoption of Minutes

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

III. CORRESPONDENCES

IV. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
A. Federal Aviation Administration's Airports Conference, Torrence, California
B. Association of Pacific Ports Annual Membership Meeting, Kaohsiung, Taiwan
C. Amendment to Bylaws: Meeting schedule

V. AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS
A. FINANCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
1. Saipan Airport's Air Traffic Control Tower Renovations Project CM Amendment No. 2 - Supplemental Funding Request and Board Sanctioning
2. Supplemental Budget Request: Rota Seaport Perimeter Fence Project Change Order No. 1
3. Supplemental Budget Request: K9 Program
4. Supplemental Budget Request: ARFF Light Rescue Utility Truck
5. Supplemental Budget Request: Tinian Airport Rooftop Air-conditioners
6. Supplemental Budget Request: Tinian Airport Signage Project
7. Airport Bond
8. Financial Affairs Committee Report (with Grants and Internal Audit Report)

B. AIRPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE
1. Amelia Earhart Monument
2. Rota Food and Beverage Concession
   a. Determination of Scope b. Procurement Method c. Evaluation Plan
3. Car Rental Concession (Saipan)
   a. Determination of Scope b. Procurement Method c. Evaluation Plan
4. Car Rental Concession (Tinian)
   a. Determination of Scope b. Procurement Method c. Evaluation Plan
5. Car Rental Concession (Rota)
   a. Determination of Scope b. Procurement Method c. Evaluation Plan
6. Airport Facilities Committee Report

C. SEAPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE
1. Tinian Marine Stevedore, Inc. (Request for Exclusivity and Warehouse)
2. Seaport Facilities Committee Report

D. PERSONNEL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
1. Comptroller Position
2. Staff Engineer Position
3. Reclassification and Position Description: Chief Administrative Officer
4. Reclassification and Position Description: CIP Administrator
5. Position Description: Office Clerk
6. Employee Compensation
7. Personnel Affairs Committee Report

VI. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION/LEGAL MATTERS
1. Executive Director's Report and Staff Presentations

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video conferencing is available via Zoom. ZOOM LINK: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

JOSE C. AYUYU
Chairman, Board of Directors

May 3, 2024

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4808/09 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: info@cnmilicensing.gov.mp
Website: www.cnmilicensing.gov.mp

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB), hereby gives notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on ***Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at 8 a.m.*** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Board of Professional Licensing Conference Room, BPL Building on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes **(04/10/2024)**
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
- **FSMB Invitation to a Symposium on Alternate Licensing Models**

VII. Director's Report
- **Senate Bill 23-62 – Contractors Licensing Act**

VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
A. Governor's Office
B. Legislature

X. Old Business
XI. New Business
XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
- Total Reviewed = _____ New Applications = _____
- Renewal = _____ Pending = _____

XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- **Report to the CNMI HCPLB (Dr. P. Brett)**
  - **NPDB Data Request Worksheet for CNMI**
- **Report Re Dr. Zigman's Complaint**
- **KCHC Pharmacist Collaborative Practice Agreement**
- **Practicing Without a License (JR)**

XV. Announcements
A. Next Meeting Date
B. Adjournment of Meeting

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
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Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Richard V. Salas
Director, DCRM

NOTICE OF DCRM PUBLIC HEARING

TRIPLE J SAIPAN, INC.
CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL DORMITORY BUILDING

The Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) will be holding a public hearing for the following project:

CRM Major Siting Application No. TMS-2022-035-A2 – The Triple J Saipan, Inc. is proposing to construct additional dormitory building on Lot No. 023 T 22 in Marpo Heights, Tinian.

The public hearing for this project is scheduled on Thursday, May 23, 2024, at 5:00PM, at the San Jose Elementary School Cafeteria in San Jose, Tinian. Virtual public participation is available via video conferencing through Zoom link: https://zoom.us/j (Meeting ID: 6706648315). Our Zoom meeting access code may change, please call the DCRM Permitting Office at (670) 664-8300 for connection assistance at least one-day prior to the public hearing date.

If you are unable to attend virtually or in-person, written comments can be submitted to the DCRM Permitting Office, Suite 305, Gualo Rai Center, Middle Road, Gualo Rai, Saipan, or mailed to the Division of Coastal Resources Management, P.O. Box 501304, or sent by fax at 664-8315, or by email at ssablan@dcrm.gov.mp. The project file is open for review and comments during regular business hours from 7:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. All written and oral comments received by DCRM will be included as part of the permit application records and will be considered in any decisions concerning the proposed project. Please contact Ms. Sam Sablan at the DCRM Permitting Office at 664-8300/1 if you have any questions or would like to learn more about the Triple J Tinian Dormitory Building Project.

/s/ Richard V. Salas
Director
Division of Coastal Resources Management

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 90

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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Out of chances: Letting Donald Trump skate is contempt for justice

Acting Manhattan state Supreme Court Justice Juan Merchan held Donald Trump in contempt for his violations of a gag order in his criminal hush money case. The penalty? A paltry $9,000. Nonetheless, the judge cautioned the former president that continued violations might result in "incarceratory punishment," just as they might for any other defendant. We hope he's not bluffing.

The idea that slapping the cuffs on would somehow help Trump, electorally and with his efforts to delegitimize the process that is attempting to at long last hold him accountable, is bunk. Whatever happens, Trump will claim he's being politically persecuted, that this trial is an infringement not only on his rights but on the country's own free elections, interfering as it is with one of the major-party candidates.

Setting aside the inanity of planting that flag in the ground while simultaneously under well-evidenced indictment for multiple efforts to reverse the 2020 election, let's think through the implications that flow from that idea.

If the existing mechanisms of accountability cannot constrain the former president, then we are saying, in effect, that he cannot be held accountable. We know exactly what Trump plans to do with this immunity; in a recent series of interviews with Time, Trump and his closest allies describe in detail schemes to finally vanquish American democracy, unconstrained by the institutional guardrails that barely held last time around.

The president and his ready sycophants would deploy the military in American cities, jail political opponents (without basis, something that cannot in any reasonable way be said about Trump), bend subsequent elections to his will, disengage from international allies, crack down on speech and generally follow the authoritarian playbook. None of that rests on wild speculation or projection—these are plain as day plans, as readily laid out by Trump himself.

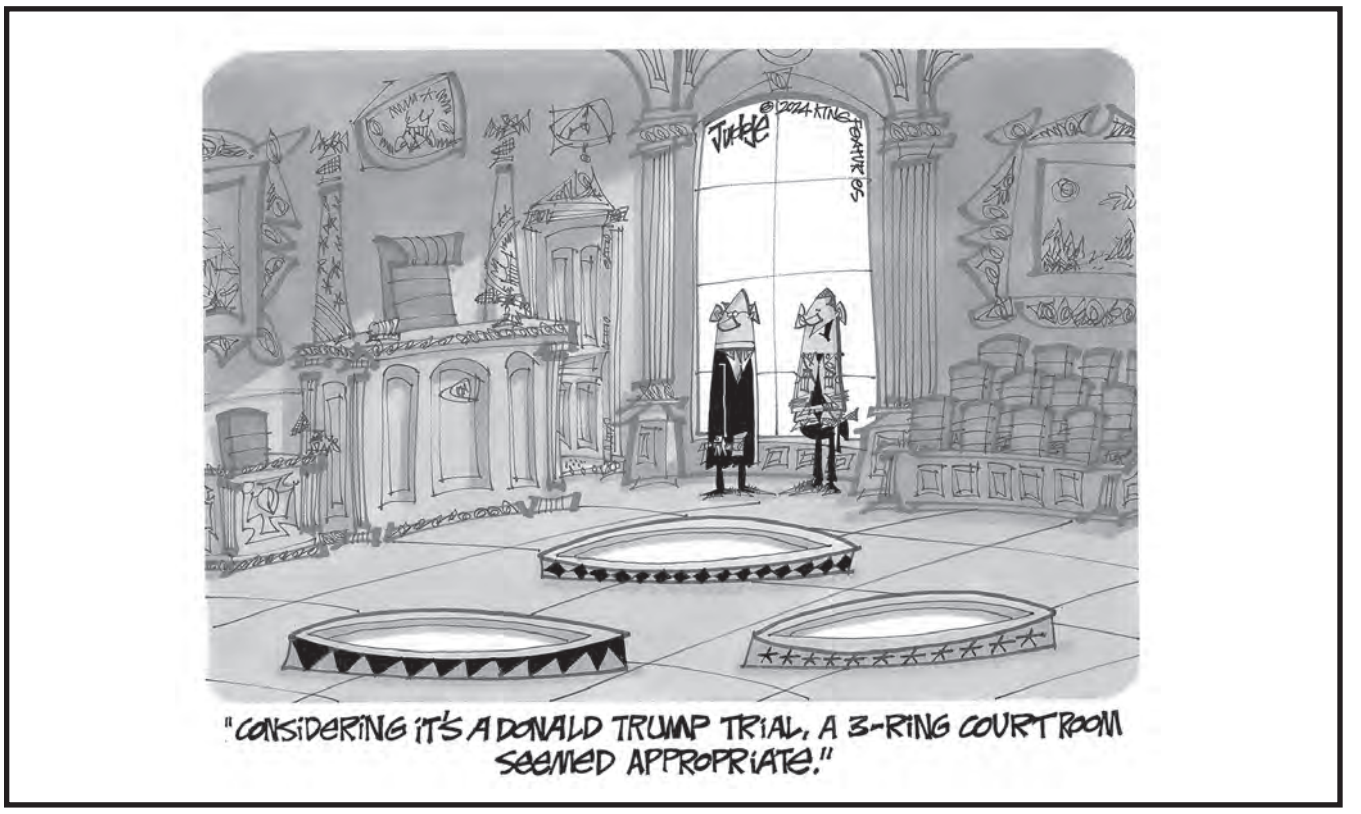
When things get to that stage, the option of actually holding him accountable begins to disappear altogether. Let us repeat: consequences need to come now, because there might not be a later.

Trump certainly hopes to use the powers of the presidency to shield himself from accountability, perhaps forever. Yet simply taking the opposite stance, showing that he's not untouchable and that he can be brought to justice, might go a long way towards puncturing the Trump phenomenon, which has always been more artifice than anything.

Trump has, for all the bluster, never held majority support in the United States. Some subset of his hard-core fans will never abandon him, but for many, it is the sense that he can stick it to the authorities, that despite the setbacks he'll sidestep and eventually subjugate the system, that holds appeal. If Trump can tell judges and prosecutors to go to hell and laugh at their rules, he's doing what I wish I could, the thinking goes.

If the veneer starts cracking—if his flimsy attempt at a civil bond surety fails and his buildings start to be seized, if his

See OUT on Page 7



Does social media rewire kids' brains? Here's what the science really says

By ANTHONY VACCARO
Los Angeles Times

Anthony Vaccaro is a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Southern California's Psychology department.

America's young people face a mental health crisis, and adults constantly debate how much to blame phones and social media. A new round of conversation has been spurred by Jonathan Haidt's book "The Anxious Generation," which contends that rising mental health issues in children and adolescents are the result of social media replacing key experiences during formative years of brain development.

The book has been criticized by academics, and rightfully so. Haidt's argument is based largely on research showing that adolescent mental health has declined since 2010, coinciding roughly with mass adoption of the smartphone. But of course, correlation is not causation. The research we have to date suggests that the effects of phones and social media on adolescent mental health are probably much more nuanced.

That complex picture is less likely to get attention than Haidt's claims because it doesn't play as much into parental fears. After all, seeing kids absorbed in their phones, and hearing that their brains are being "rewired," calls to mind an alien world-domination plot straight from a sci-fi film.

And that's part of the problem with the "rewiring the brain" narrative of screen time. It reflects a larger trope in public discussion that wields brain science as a scare tactic without yielding much real insight.

First, let's consider what the research has shown so far. Meta-analyses of the links between mental health and social media give inconclusive or relatively minor results. The largest U.S. study on childhood brain development to date did not find significant relationships between the development of brain function and digital media use. This month, an American Psychological Assn. health advisory reported that the current state of research shows "using social media is not inherently beneficial or harmful to young people" and that its effects depend on "pre-existing strengths or vulnerabilities, and the contexts in which they grow up."

So why the insistence from Haidt and others that smartphones dangerously rewire the brain? It stems from misunderstandings of research that I have encountered frequently as a neuroscientist studying emotional development, behavioral addictions and people's reactions to media.

Imaging studies in neuroscience typically compare some feature of the brain between two groups: one that does not do a specific behavior (or does it less frequently) and one that does the behavior more frequently. When we find a relationship, all it means is either that the behavior influences something about the functioning of this brain feature, or something about this feature influences whether we engage in the behavior.

In other words, an association between increased brain activity and using social media could mean that social media activates the identified pathways, or people who already have increased activity in those pathways tend to be drawn to social media, or both.

Fearmongering happens when the mere association between an activity such as social media use and a brain pathway is taken as a sign of something harmful on its own. Functional and structural research on the brain cannot give enough information to objectively identify increases or decreases in neural activity, or in a brain region's thickness, as "good" or "bad." There is no default healthy status quo that everybody's brains are measured against, and doing nearly any activity involves many parts of the brain.

"The Anxious Generation" neglects these subtleties when, for example, it discusses a brain system known as the default mode network. This system decreases in activity when we engage with spirituality, meditation and related endeavors, and Haidt uses this fact to claim that social media is "not healthy for any of us" because studies suggest that it by contrast increases activity in the same network.

But the default mode network is just a set of brain regions that tend to be involved in internally focused thinking, such as contemplating your past or making a moral judgment, versus externally focused thinking such as playing chess or driving an unfamiliar route. Its increased activity does not automatically mean something unhealthy.

This type of brain-related scare tactic is not new. A common version, which is also deployed for smartphones, involves pathways in the brain linked to drug addiction, including areas that respond to dopamine and opioids. The trope says that any activity associated with such pathways is addictive, like drugs, whether it's Oreos, cheese, God, credit card purchases, suntanning or looking at a pretty face. These things do involve neural pathways related to motivated behavior—but that does not mean they damage our brains or should be equated with drugs.

Adolescence is a time when the brain is particularly plastic, or prone to change. But change doesn't have to be bad. We should take advantage of plasticity to help teach kids healthy ways to self-manage their own use of, and feelings surrounding, smartphones.

Do I expect future findings on the adolescent brain to imme-

See DOES on Page 7

Unwrapping the gifts of teaching: A journey of inspiration and resilience

By ROSEMARIE D. EMBILE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rosemarie Embile is a teacher at the Northern Marianas International School.

August 2000 marked the beginning of a remarkable journey for me—the journey of teaching. Over the past two decades, I've come to see my calling as one of the greatest gifts in my life. Teaching isn't just a profession; it's a vocation that has enriched me in ways I could have never imagined. As an educator, I am grateful for the valuable lessons, friendships, and experiences that have enriched my life.

My teaching journey has been a testament to triumphs and challenges that are two sides of the coin. While setbacks and frustrations seem overwhelming, they are opportunities that help me learn and grow as a person. As I continue this journey, I uncover the greatest gift—the profound privilege of shaping the future generation.

Here are some of my reflections expressing my gratitude for the gifts of teaching:

■ **Expanding horizons:** Throughout my teaching journey, I've had the opportunity to work in three different schools, each providing unique experiences and valuable lessons. However, it was my experience teaching abroad that truly transformed me, enriching my understanding of education in various ways. This experience broadened my knowledge of diverse cultures. Interacting with students from different backgrounds expanded my worldview and perspectives. The challenge of adapting to a new educational system in a foreign country has made me a more versatile educator. In these diverse environments, I've gained new perspectives and honed my craft, broadening the horizons of my educational landscape.

■ **Network of support:** Teaching is a collaborative effort that thrives on the support of fellow educators. When I was new to teaching, I had friends who were my co-workers and eventually became my pillars of strength, offering guidance and encouragement during challenging times. Through their shared experiences and strategies, I have collectively grown and become a better educator. The friendships developed among teachers have created a beautiful camaraderie in the teaching community.

■ **Parental partnership:** Parents' unwavering support is a cornerstone and the foundation of practical education. Their trust in entrusting their children to our care is a responsibility I hold dear. Collaborating between educators and parents is not just beneficial; it's essential. It enhances the educational journey, ensuring students receive the best possible guidance and nurturing at school and home.

■ **Family:** A foundation of strength: A strong family support network is crucial to the success of every teacher. Fortunately, my husband always offers his unwavering support whenever I need it. He lifts my spirits whenever I need a little boost by bringing me a coffee. His considerate gesture of helping me with my books and other belongings has made my life much easier. This simple act of kindness from him has been a great source of comfort for me. Both of my siblings are also teachers like myself, and they have always been a source of encouragement and motivation for me to pursue my dreams. Their unwavering faith has given me a solid foundation of strength, helping me overcome teaching challenges with a resilient spirit.

■ **The joy of young minds:** As a teacher, I've realized that being in the company of students is like a captivating journey. Each interaction is an opportunity to unwrap a package filled with boundless inspiration. The classroom is not just a place of instruction but a realm where students become our unwitting mentors, giving life lessons that are a significant source of wisdom.

In the classroom, we can witness remarkable growth and transformation. Seeing a student who has struggled to rise to the challenge is genuinely inspiring. Their unwavering resilience reminds us that setbacks are only temporary and can serve as valuable opportunities for personal development.

Observing their interactions, I have witnessed leadership, compassion, and teamwork emerge naturally. They have learned about the complexities of human relationships with raw sincerity, from conflicts to collaborations, which can be humbling and heartwarming.

Interacting with young minds is not just a job but a chance to explore a world of wonder where every day brings new insights, unexpected lessons, and boundless inspiration. They are the heartbeats that give life to education, and I am deeply humbled and appreciative for the privilege of learning from them too.

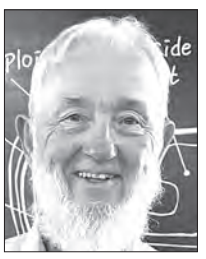
Reflecting upon the last 23 years, I am profoundly grateful for the many gifts teaching has given me. The challenges, friendships, experiences, and unwavering support have shaped me into the educator I am today. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of this incredible journey. Above all, I am deeply thankful to the divine source of blessings and life, our God Almighty, for guiding me along this path of purpose and fulfillment. Happy Teacher's Appreciation Week to all teachers!

POTUS campaign 2024 Bigly Trump Slump

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. Joey is the Poet Laureate of Tinian, celebrating 40 years in the CNMI.



Effective this May I am putting my Red Caesarean series on hiatus until the U.S. presidential inauguration in 2025. Homunculus is Latin for "little man" or "little person." The seven homunculus are named after the seven deadly sins: Pride, Lust, Greed, Wrath, Sloth, Gluttony, and Envy.

TRUMP is KING in HOMUNCULUS HEAVEN

Trump was crowned King of Homunculus Heaven
Who is that 'little man' inside Donald's bigly brain
He seems in infinite regress, his mind is in a mess
His NYC trial is a virtual calculus of variations
A courtroom examination of his prevarications
A hush money trial on his 2016 election situation.
His 'Pride' in Trump Tower is a golden toilet throne
where he sits and strains bigly when he tries to 'spit'
He 'Lusts' after women, wives, and other female lives
With his billionaire 'Greed' he never has enough
His 'Wrath' personified with "I am your retribution."
In his 'Sloth' he doesn't read reports and has his staff simplify information for him with bullets every day
His 'Gluttony' is for control, he's drunk on more power
'Envy' is dictators Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un.
Following his coronation in an alternate universe
Donald woke then fell back to sleep in a courtroom.

WHO'S THE VEEP? WHERE'S THE VEEP?

(a vice presidential short-sheet sonnet on it)
Who's the Veep? At Mar-a-Lago half asleep?
Swear words cut out with bleep beep bleep
Another convicted perverted sexual creep?
Is his/her ideology of democracy not deep?
Support for women's rights on a dung heap?
Did 45 buy their undying loyalty on the cheap?
Will Mar-a-Lago be their final castle keep?
Will the Veep help 45 win an election sweep?
While VP will they fear to utter a single peep?
What benefits of their office will they ever reap?
Will their nomination make election costs steep?
Do MAGA voters care who is Trump's Veep?
See the election results. "read 'em and weep".

DOES

From page 6

diately quell parents' fears on this issue? Of course not—and the point is that they shouldn't. Brain imaging data is a fascinating way to explore interactions between psychology, neuroscience and social factors. It's just not a tool for declaring behaviors to be pathological. Feel free to question whether social media is good for kids—but don't misuse neuroscience to do so.

OUT

From page 6

goading of Merchan results in real, significant consequences—then the magic will quickly dissipate. The man will be left standing with all he has ever had: his narcissism, his entitlement and his steadfast conviction that people will give him what he wants. This time he'll be wrong.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Truth 4: WHERE is Palestine Today!

The TRUTH of the matter is Palestine was taken off the map, so WHERE is Palestine today? The human right of "self-determination" is why Hamas has been fighting against Israel's attempts to "contain & control the Palestinian People." The problem is not the Israeli People but the Israeli Government leaders who do not want the Palestinian People to have their own land or country which is the source of all the tension and now a war fueled by bigotry resulting in war crimes being perpetrated on the Palestinians by the Israeli military. The resentment and protest of Americans is NOT towards the People of Israel nor their religion but about what the Israeli government is and has been doing to the Palestinian People for decades. Some media outlets have even resorted to calling the Palestinian People "Gazans" which is not a country and reminds me of how African Americans didn't have a formal country and were called names like Negros when there is no place called "Negrodia."

Palestine was once on the maps but ever since America helped Israel take back their homeland in the "6-days war" leaving the Gaza Strip and other lands west of Israel for the Palestinian people. But with the Palestinians not having control of their lives that were being controlled by Israel this war was bound to happen. The Israeli people had literally relocated to Germany but when Hitler came to power and the genocide that followed took place it created a strong desire among the Israeli people to return to their homeland that had been taken over by the Palestinians. In fact, Palestine was on the maps and Israel was not, which is now in reverse with Palestine not being on the map, so I must ask the obvious question of Where is Palestine today!!!

The tension has always been about the Palestinians having their own land/country, as the "two-state solution" has always been the solution for the Palestinians and Israeli People to live in proximity and in peace that is driven by "mutual respect for the Human Rights of each other." I can remember my MaDear once telling me that "Two wrongs will never = (equal) One Right," which is TRUE as the terroristic approach by Hamas instead of using the United Nations to gain Self-Determination Rights and Israel's control of the Palestinians and their way of life instead of granting them the right to have a state of their own will never yield or equal a peace.

College students have often been the epic center for change going back to Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, and even the Tiananmen Square protest in China in 1989. So, it's not surprising for me to see college students leading the protest throughout America. In fact, I have known since I was a young man in college when Yasser Arafat, also popularly known by his kunya Abu Ammar and a founder of modern-day terrorism, came to power as the Palestinian political leader that Israel was abusing and controlling the Palestinian People. I have known for over two decades that these days of reckoning (war) would be the reality between the Palestinians & Israeli people. Respect is a "reciprocal phenomenon" and the solution is to simply grant the Palestinian People their right of "Self Determination" and put Palestine back on the world-map and this seemingly never-ending conflict will come to an end—it's called RESPECT & EQUALITY, it's just that simple!

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman III

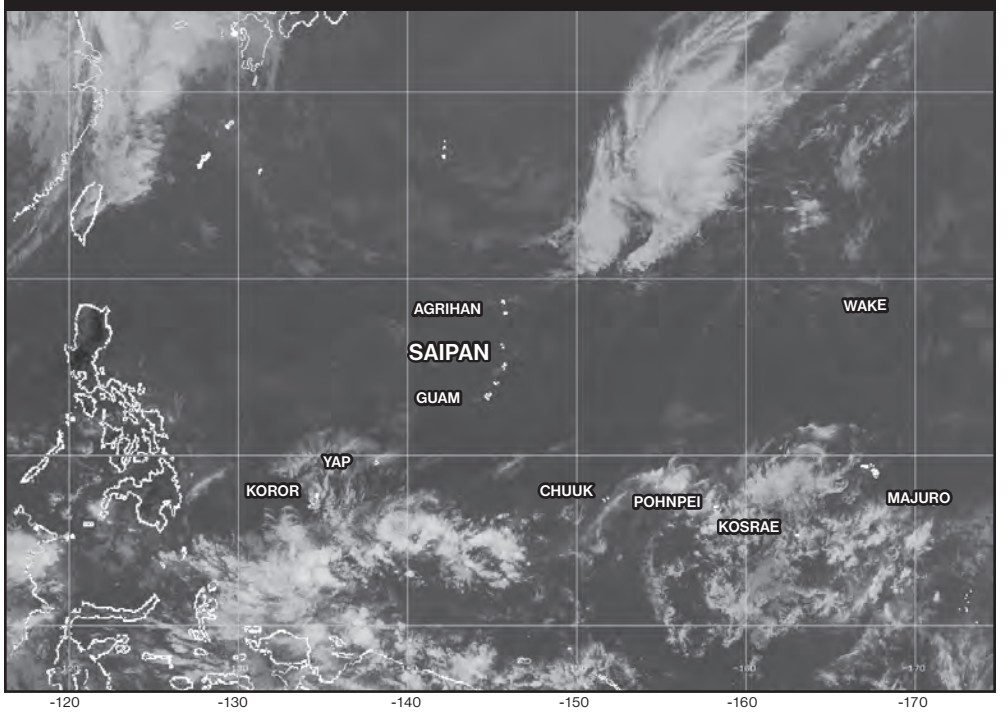
Editor's note: *This letter to the editor is dedicated to Bennett's late friend Mr. Abed Younis, who was a Palestinian, and a true champion of the freedom of the press. He was the founder and former editor of the* Marianas Variety *and a shorter version of this op-ed was sent to the Washington Post for publication. It's also written in the artistic style of caps by the author and his language of Ebonics. It's also*

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with a 10 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms.
87° 77°	86° 78°	86° 78°	86° 78°	86° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 5:02 AM SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Partly cloudy skies reign over the Marianas with the worst of is near Saipan. Altimetry shows combined seas of 3 to 5 feet to the far west. Winds are out of the east and are gentle.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	89° / 79°
Palau	Cloudy	86° / 79°
Yap	Cloudy	86° / 80°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 81°
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	84° / 79°
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	84° / 79°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:51 AM	6:35 PM
Tuesday	5:51 AM	6:36 PM
Wednesday	5:50 AM	6:36 PM
Thursday	5:50 AM	6:36 PM
Friday	5:49 AM	6:37 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	4:04 AM	4:43 PM	-
Tuesday	4:47 AM	5:43 PM	-
Wednesday	5:33 AM	6:45 PM	-
Thursday	6:22 AM	7:49 PM	-
Friday	7:16 AM	8:52 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Fair	61° / 54°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	81° / 54°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	84° / 77°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	83° / 71°
London	Partly Cloudy	57° / 45°
Los Angeles	Cloudy	86° / 64°
Manila	Fair	98° / 80°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	63° / 48°
Miami	Sunny	84° / 73°
New York	Cloudy	61° / 50°
Osaka	Cloudy	68° / 57°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	73° / 55°
Busan	Rain	61° / 52°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	70° / 48°
Salem	Sunny	74° / 49°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	59° / 51°
Seoul	Rain	82° / 60°
Tokyo	Sunny	81° /62°
Washington, DC	Cloudy	55° / 52°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
5:47 AM	High Tide	2.13
12:30 PM	Low Tide	0.25
6:47 PM	High Tide	1.97
12:33 AM	Low Tide	0.81

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 28, 2024

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:10AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	6:10AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX77	4:05AM	7:00AM	1, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:25PM	4:10AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	2, 5 via Palau

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

HX76	7:35PM	2:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Guam Guard recruits jump from 3 to 75 in the CNMI

Guam National Guard troops hailing from the neighboring Northern Mariana Islands have increased 2,400% from three in 2022 to 75 in 2024. Driving this effort is Sgt. Juan Camacho, heavy equipment operator with the 1224th Engineer Support Company and native of Saipan.

Camacho is also a former swimming champion and community organizer for youth sports events. He is the sole recruiter for the National Guard in the Northern Marianas.

"It all comes down to relationships, honesty, and pride." said Camacho. "I was born and raised in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and being involved with the community has definitely paved the way."

The CNMI is an unincorporated territory and commonwealth of the United States consisting of 14 islands in the western Pacific. The majority of the 47,329 residents live on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, and share ethnic Chamoru culture and ancestry with neighboring Guam.

Both Guam and the NMI are still recovering from the effects of recent Category 4 typhoons and the COVID-19 pandemic on their tourism-based economies.

Camacho was given orders to be a recruiting assistant on Saipan in 2022, tasked with advertising the presence of the Guam Army National Guard.

GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

U.S. Army Sgt. Juan Camacho of the Guam National Guard mans his makeshift recruiting office on Captiol Hill, Saipan, April 20, 2024. Camacho has helped increase the number of NMI Guardsmen from three to over 70 in two years.

Unsatisfied, he felt he could do more, so he went to recruiting school and graduated Commandant's List.

Now in his first year as a fully qualified recruiter, Camacho has already exceeded his recruiting mission just a few months into fiscal 2024 and he doesn't plan to stop.

"The mission was just the warm-up," Camacho said. "I'm looking to set the bar and maintain the pace to become recruiter of the year. The grind doesn't stop there."

In April, the Guam Guard command team visited Saipan to meet with NMI political leadership, visit with Guard troops in the recruiting pipeline, and discuss recruiting issues. Brig. Gen. Michael Cruz, adjutant general, and Command Sgt. Maj. Celso Leonen, command senior enlisted leader, praised Camacho for his good work but underscored the need to prepare for the surge in recruits.

"It's obviously a good problem to have, and Sgt. Camacho is a posterchild of everything a Soldier should be," said Cruz. "But we as a command have to take care of these soldiers and support them properly. If we don't, it becomes a ticking time bomb."

Other than Camacho, there are currently no administrative support personnel available for troops in the NMI between drill weekends. Other challenges include lodging and transportation for troops while in Guam for drill, procuring a recruiting storefront on Saipan, and using Federal Tuition Assistance for higher education institutions on Saipan.

While plans to address these challenges are underway, Camacho says he is not deterred from his mission. He plans to push for even more community events to promote recruiting, develop a family readiness group, and continue bringing opportunities for a better life to the people of the Northern Marianas.

"The CNMI has always sought to prevail through the greatest of challenges," Camacho said. "Thanks to the Lord above, my beautiful family, and my leadership both in the Guard and my local government, I am blessed to be able to mentor the next generation of leaders." ***(PR)***

GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Michael Cruz and Command Sgt. Maj Celso Leonen of the Guam National Guard, left, promote soldiers of the Guard's Recruit Sustainment Program, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, April 20, 2024.

GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

U.S. Army Sgt. Juan Camacho of the Guam National Guard, right, briefs Brig. Gen. Mike Cruz, adjutant general, on new recruits from the Northern Mariana Islands, Saipan, April 19, 2024. The only Guard recruiter on Saipan, Camacho has helped increase the number of NMI Guardsmen from three to over 70 in two years.

GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

Members of the Guam National Guard Recruit Sustainment Program and command team, with volunteers from the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, gather for a promotion ceremony on Capitol Hill, Saipan, April 20, 2024.

Rota SBDC to host Cybersecurity 101 on Rota

ROTA—Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and are also increasingly becoming targets for cyber threats. In recognition of the critical need for cybersecurity education and preparedness, the Rota Small Business Development Center is proud to announce its upcoming training session, "Cybersecurity 101," specifically tailored for entrepreneurs and small business owners on the island of Rota.

Scheduled for Thursday, May 23, 2024, from 4:30pm to 6:30pm, the training will be held in Room A-1 at the Northern Marianas College Rota Center. This invaluable session will be conducted by renowned cybersecurity expert Herman M. Kintol, owner of KRS Cyberworx. With over a decade of experience in the field, Kintol brings a wealth of knowledge and practical insights to help attendees understand the fundamentals of cybersecurity and how to protect their businesses from cyber threats.

Cybersecurity is no longer a luxury but a necessity for businesses of all sizes. As technology continues to advance, so do the methods employed by cybercriminals. Small businesses, often lacking the resources and expertise of larger corporations, are particularly vulnerable to cyberattacks. A single breach can have devastating impacts, including financial loss, damage to reputation, and even legal liabilities.

By participating in "Cybersecurity 101," small business owners on Rota will gain essential and affordable knowledge and skills to safeguard their digital assets, customer data, and overall business operations. Topics covered will include understanding common cyber threats, implementing basic security measures, and developing a proactive cybersecurity strategy tailored to the unique needs of small businesses.

Seats for this training session are limited, and interested individuals are encouraged to register early to secure their spot.

Registration can be completed online at: https://marianas.ecenterdirect.com/events/1019156. For additional information, please contact the CNMI SBDC at (670) 237-6888 or email us at cnmisbdc@marianas.edu.

As part of CNMI SBDC's ongoing commitment to supporting budding entrepreneurs, this training opportunity comes at no-cost to participants. To learn more about the CNMI SBDC, and the range of programs and services available to small businesses in the Northern Mariana Islands, visit the official website at www.cnmisbdc.com.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our communities, and safeguarding their success is essential for a thriving economy.

Join CNMI SBDC for "Cybersecurity 101" and take the first step towards securing your business in an increasingly digital world. ***(PR)***

Business

United Airlines launches Tokyo/Haneda-Guam route

GUAM—United Airlines launched the much-anticipated Tokyo/Haneda to Guam service on May 1, 2024, with gate events in Tokyo and Guam to celebrate with passengers traveling on the inaugural flight between the two locations.

The new service departs Guam at 7:05pm and arrives in Tokyo/Haneda at 10pm the same day. The return flight from Tokyo/Haneda to Guam departs at 11:55pm and arrives on Guam at 4:45am the following morning. United operates the flight with a 737-800 with 166 seats, 16 of which are in business class.

The new daily nonstop service provides greater choice for customers in Tokyo to travel to Guam and creates a more direct link between Guam and Tokyo's city center. From Tokyo/Haneda, customers will also benefit from 30 plus connections to destinations across Japan with United's Star Alliance partner, ANA.

United now offers direct services to Guam from five airports in Japan – Tokyo/Haneda, Tokyo/Narita, Osaka, Fukuoka, and Nagoya.

Kenichi Kiriyama, director of Sales, Japan and Micronesia at United, leads United's dedicated Sales team in Japan who work to promote Guam as a preferred vacation destination for Japanese customers.

UNITED

United Airlines and partners from the Guam International Airport Authority, Guam Visitors Bureau, and Customs and Border Protection welcome passengers on the Tokyo/Haneda-Guam inaugural flight.

He said, "The new route creates a more direct link for customers living in the Greater Tokyo area and provides another convenient way to travel to Guam. Tokyo/Haneda is a game-changer for travelers from Japan, providing an easier and more convenient commute to the airport for our Guam flight. Customers can complete a full day at work and then travel to the Haneda airport, only 13 minutes away by train to check in for their overnight flight to Guam. They will wake up in paradise ready to begin their vacation."

Sam Shinohara, managing director for Airport Operations-Asia/Pacific at United, noted that the Tokyo/Haneda-Guam flights will operate year-round and will create a more direct link to what is considered the most convenient airport in Tokyo.

"The new Tokyo/Haneda-Guam route is beneficial to customers in both directions. Aside from a convenient travel option for Tokyo residents, Guam customers can access downtown Tokyo and area attractions with greater convenience," Shinohara said.

With this addition, United will operate six daily flights from Tokyo/Haneda, with services to New York/Newark, Washington D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and now Guam. United also operates up to 10 daily flights to Tokyo's Narita airport, with services to New York/Newark, Houston, Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Guam and Saipan. United offers more seats from the United States to Tokyo than any other U.S. airline.

Shinohara added, "Our United team worked diligently to secure this route. Japan is an important tourism market for Guam, and the new daily flight from Tokyo/Haneda will provide added service from Japan's largest city."

As Guam's hometown airline for more than 55 years, United offers more than 87 weekly flights to 14 destinations and is the only airline today flying between Guam and Osaka, Fukuoka and Nagoya in Japan, islands in the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau.

UNITED

Passengers arrive on United Airlines' Tokyo/Haneda-Guam inaugural flight.

About United

At United, Good Leads The Way. With U.S. hubs in Chicago, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, New York/Newark, San Francisco and Washington, D.C., United operates the most comprehensive global route network among North American carriers and is now the largest airline in the world. For more about how to join the United team, please visit www.united.com/careers and more information about the company is at www.united.com. United Airlines Holdings, Inc., the parent company of United Airlines, Inc., is traded on the Nasdaq under the symbol "UAL." ***(PR)***

Tokyo/Haneda (HND) – Guam (GUM)

Flight	From	To	Depart	Arrive	Frequency	Aircraft
UA849	GUM	HND	7:05 PM	10:00 PM	Daily	Boeing 737-800
UA848	HND	GUM	11:55 PM	4:45 AM	Daily	Boeing 737-800

BOG's Hagatna City Run & Block Party raises big money for fight against cancer

HAGATNA, Guam—Bank of Guam announces record-breaking milestones following their Hagåtña City Run and Block Party held on March 9, 2024.

The signature event, now in its 17th year, raised nearly $87,000 through sponsorships, race registration, vendor pledges, beer garden and merchandise sales, and team registration from the Clutch 3x3 Basketball Tournament—all of which reported its biggest number in years.

A check for one hundred percent of all cash donations and proceeds totaling $79,635, was presented to the event's two beneficiaries, the Guam Chapter of the American Cancer Society and Guam Cancer Care, at the bank's recent quarterly celebration in front of over 300 Bank of Guam employees.

It is always heartwarming to see our community come together for a cause, especially one that hits so close to home for so many. The fight against cancer is an ongoing, community battle. Events like ours give us an opportunity to celebrate this fight and remind all our cancer survivors, warriors, caretakers, and families that there is hope and they are not alone.

"We are so grateful for the generosity of our partners and the hard work of our employees and volunteers that worked to make this year's Hagåtña City Run & Block Party bigger and better than it's ever been," said Joaquin P. L.G. Cook, president and chief executive officer of Bank of Guam.

Here's a breakdown of the Hagåtña City & Run Block Party highlights:

■ The event featured an unforgettable sunset 5K taking runners through the heart of Hagåtña. More than 1,300 runners registered for the race—an increase from last year, and the highest for the Hagåtña City Run & Block Party for nearly a decade.

■ A total of 42 of the fastest finishers were recognized in their respective age divisions with Hugh Kent finishing first overall, Derek Mandell finishing second, and Ryan Matienzo finishing third

■ A celebration of local talent brought live music and energy throughout the night featuring Pop Rocks & Soda, The John Dank Show, SKIP Entertainment Company, DJ Sylnt, JED, and DJ Lil Meish

■ A total of 47 food trucks, novelty vendors, non-profit organizations and amusement vendors were on full display, showcasing and celebrating the best of Guam products and services.

■ A total of 27 teams participated in the Clutch 3x3 Basketball Tournament featuring some of Guam's best boys and girls middle school players.

■ The event featured over 300 volunteers from Bank of Guam employees, community and business partners, and Guam's public and private schools.

■ Thousands of families and friends attended and partied for a purpose throughout the night.

The celebration was made possible through the generosity and support from community partners, most especially our sponsors. Thank you to the following:

American Cancer Society & Guam Cancer Care
$ 79,635.00
Seventy-nine thousand, six hundred thirty-five & 00/100
Bank of Guam
Hagåtña City Run & Block Party

BOG

Bank of Guam presents Guam Cancer Care and the American Cancer Society with the proceeds raised from the Hagatna City Run & Block Party. The presentation was made during the bank's quarterly Hula-Hoopla Lu'au-themed celebration on April 24, 2024.

■ Platinum Sponsors: ASC Trust, Guam Auto Spot, Docomo Pacific Business, GTA, Guam Visitors Bureau, IP&E, PHR Micronesia, Inc. (Country Club of the Pacific, Hilton Guam Resort & Spa, Hyatt Regency Guam, Pacific Islands Club, Hotel Nikko Guam, The Tsubaki Tower, Rihga Royal Laguna Guam Resort), TakeCare, Wendy's and Cold Stone Creamery, and Custom Fitness Guam.

■ Gold Sponsors: Calvo's SelectCare, Cars Plus, M80 Systems, Health City, Smithbridge Guam, Paradise Fitness and Paradise Premium, and Rice & Ramen.

■ Silver Sponsors: Ada's Trust & Investment, Inc., AM Insurance, Matson, McDonald's, Pay-Less Supermarkets, JIF and TropiCool Ice, South Pacific Petroleum Corporation, and Triple J Enterprises.

■ Concession Sponsors: Ambros (Arizona Hard, Deep Eddy Vodka, Michelob Ultra), Island Beverage Distributors (Heineken and Espolon Tequila), and Glimpses of Guam (BodyArmor, Coca-Cola, Foremost, and Good to Go Rides and Powerade).

■ In-Kind Sponsors: Ajisen Ramen, Baldyga Group (Karera and Taotao Tasi), California Pizza Kitchen, International Distributors, Infusion, IT&E, Royal Pacific Motors Yamaha, Run Guam, Tony Roma's, United Airlines, Vantage Media, and Title Guaranty. ***(PR)***

Life & Style

Hamill drops by White House for visit with 'Joe-bi-Wan Kenobi'

WASHINGTON (AP)—"Star Wars" actor Mark Hamill dropped by the White House on Friday for a visit with President Joe Biden and walked away with a pair of the president's aviator sunglasses and a greater respect for the office.

"I love the merch," he said, taking off the glasses during a quick appearance at the White House daily press briefing following his visit with Biden. Hamill, 72, famous for playing Luke Skywalker, kidded with reporters that he'd take a few questions—as long as they weren't about "Star Wars."

"I was honored to be asked to come to the White House to meet the president," he said. He's been to the White House before, during the Carter and Obama administrations, but he'd never checked out the Oval Office, and that was quite something, he said. Biden showed off photographs and other Oval Office items, Hamill said.

Hamill said Biden told him to call him "Joe," to which Hamill offered an alternative suggestion: "Can I call you Joe-bi-Wan Kenobi?"

"He liked that," said Hamill, who also voiced the Joker in "Batman: The Animated Series."

Both Hamill and the White House were vague about his reason for visiting. But Hamill, a Democrat and Biden supporter with a huge social media following, has been posting about the president's reelection campaign this week.

AP

Actor Mark Hamill takes off sunglasses given to him by President Joe Biden, as he joins White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre as she speaks with reporters in the James Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House, Friday, May 3, 2024, in Washington.

"May The First Not Quench Your Thirst For Biden's Re-election!" he wrote on May 1.

On Friday he posted, "May The Third Be Absurd That The Guy Who Tried To Steal A Fair Election Is Allowed To Run Again," a reference to Donald Trump and his efforts to overturn the 2020 presidential election.

May 4th is unofficially "Star Wars" Day, in part because of the famous Jedi phrase "May the force be with you." The pun goes, "May the fourth be with you."

Spacey denies new allegations of inappropriate behavior to be aired on UK television next week

LONDON (AP)—Kevin Spacey, the Oscar-winning actor, has denied new allegations of inappropriate behaviour from men who will feature in a documentary on British television that is due to be released next week.

In an online interview with journalist Dan Wootton, Spacey said he has never done anything illegal and admitted that he has struggled to get back to work after being acquitted last year of criminal charges in a London court.

"I can't go through this again, allowing myself to be baselessly attacked without defending myself," he said in the interview entitled "Kevin Spacey: Right Of Reply" which was aired late Friday on Wootton's YouTube channel.

Last July, a London jury acquitted Spacey on sexual assault charges stemming from allegations by four men dating back 20 years. The court victory was his second since he saw off a $40 million lawsuit in 2022 in New York brought by "Star Trek: Discovery" actor Anthony Rapp.

AP

Actor Kevin Spacey addresses the media outside Southwark Crown Court in London, Wednesday, July 26, 2023.

The documentary "Spacey Unmasked" is set to be aired on May 6 and 7 on Channel 4 in Britain and streamed on Max in the U.S.

The documentary is said to feature testimony from men regarding events between 1976 and 2013, the actor revealed during the interview.

"I take full responsibility for my past behaviour and my actions, but I cannot and will not take responsibility or apologize to anyone who's made up stuff about me or exaggerated stories about me," said Spacey, who won Academy Awards for "The Usual Suspects" and "American Beauty".

Rio de Janeiro set for Madonna's massive Copacabana beach concert

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—Madonna will give a free concert on Copacabana beach Saturday night, turning its vast stretch of sand into an enormous dance floor. It comes after Rio de Janeiro spent the last few days readying itself for the historic performance by the "Queen of Pop."

Rio's City Hall has said some 1.5 million spectators are anticipated, more than 10 times more than Madonna's record attendance of 130,000 in Paris' Parc des Sceaux in 1987. Madonna's official website has been hyping the show as the biggest ever in her four-decade career.

It will be the last show of The Celebration Tour, her first retrospective which kicked off in October in London.

In recent days, the buzz has been palpable. Fans milled outside the stately, beachfront Copacabana Palace hotel, where Madonna is staying, hoping to catch a glimpse of the pop star. During the sound check on the stage that's in front of her hotel, they danced on the sand.

By about noon Saturday, hundreds of fans had gathered in front of the hotel. A white-bearded man carried a sign saying "Welcome Madonna you are the best I love you."

Flags with 'Madonna' printed against a background of Copacabana's iconic black and white waved sidewalk pattern hung from balconies. The area was teeming with street vendors and concert attendees kitted out in themed T-shirts, sweating under a baking sun.

"Since Madonna arrived here, I've been coming every day with this outfit to welcome my idol, my diva, my pop queen," said Rosemary de Oliveira Bohrer, 69, who was supporting a gold-colored cone bra and a black cap.

"It's going to be an unforgettable show here in Copacabana," said Oliveira Bohrer, a retired civil servant who lives in the area.

Eighteen sound towers have been spread along the beach to ensure that all attendees can hear the hits. Her two-hour show is set to start at 9:45 p.m. local time.

City Hall produced a report in April estimating that the concert will inject 293 million reals ($57 million) into the local economy. Hotel capacity is expected to reach 98% in Copacabana, according to Rio's hotel association. Fans hailing from across Brazil and even Argentina and France sought out Airbnbs for the weekend, the platform said in a statement. And Rio's international airport forecast an extra 170 flights from May 1-6, from 27 destinations, City Hall said in a statement.

"It's a unique opportunity to see Madonna, who knows if she'll ever come back," said Alessandro Augusto, 53, who flew in from Ceara state—approximately 2,500 km (1,555 miles) from Rio.

Millionaire son who never pays calls his father cheap

DEAR ABBY: When we are out as a family, my 30-year-old, millionaire son never pays for anything. He eats more than any of us and never reaches for his wallet, not even to help with the tip. This has been going on for years, and my wife always defends him. I have given up trying to fix it.

I'm writing because my son never fails to criticize the amount of the tip I do leave. I generally leave something in the 15% to 18% range, which he finds offensive. He works in the hospitality industry and insists that 20% is minimum. When I invite him to supplement the tip, he says, "If you don't want to tip appropriately, you shouldn't go out to eat."

I am a retired teacher. The idea of tipping a waiter $45 for carrying plates for 10 minutes seems ludicrous to me. He says the tips are shared by the whole staff, and they are how they feed their families.

I would love to hear your thoughts, because I've reached the point where I no longer want to go out with the family again. Last time, the bill was $150, to which I added a $28 tip, only to be humiliated and told I was a cheapskate who should be ashamed of myself.

FAIR DAD IN TEXAS

DEAR DAD: The rules of tipping have changed in recent years. What used to be considered adequate in the 15% to 18% range is no longer the norm. Twenty percent or more is standard now. However, for your millionaire son to criticize you about the size of the tip you are leaving (while refusing to supplement it) is beyond rude. He's biting the hand that just fed him, and you AND your wife should point it out.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am a single woman who has been dating the same guy for 13 years. Before that, I was married for 35 years. I have NEVER cheated on anyone I have been with. Many of my friends' male friends (married and single) have hit on me. Maybe it's because most people don't see my boyfriend and me out and about. When they hit on me, I tell them I'll tell their wife or girlfriend. I have a straightforward personality, so most of the guys won't go further than that.

The husband in a couple I know builds decks. I hired him to build one for me. I always held him in high regard for his relationship with his wife and how he treated me as a woman and a friend. He was a rare true gentleman. Then, one day while he was here building my deck, he hit on me. I flat-out told him no way, and that I respected his wife and marriage more than he did. Needless to say, I was heartbroken and disappointed.

Abby, he hasn't completed work I have paid for, and I really want to defend myself to his wife. Shouldn't she be thanking me instead of hating me? How do I handle this?

CRYING OVER IT IN ILLINOIS

DEAR CRYING: Handle this by finding someone else to complete your deck project. Take him to small-claims court to have your money refunded—or go to Judge Judy and let her eviscerate the presumptuous scoundrel.

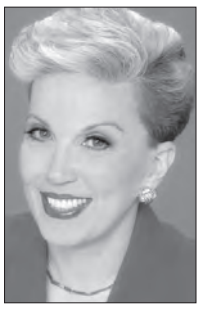
■■■

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

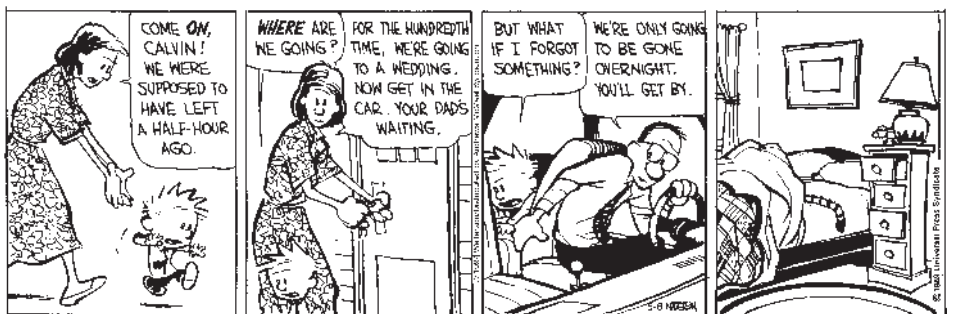


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


COME ON, CALVIN! WE WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE LEFT A HALF-HOUR AGO.
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
FOR THE HUNDREDTH TIME, WERE GOING TO A WEDDING. NOW GET IN THE CAR. YOUR DAD'S WAITING.
BUT WHAT IF I FORGOT SOMETHING?
WE'RE ONLY GOING TO BE GONE OVERNIGHT. YOU'LL GET BY.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WHY?
I WANTED A NEW PERSPECTIVE.
I SEE EVERYTHING FROM A KID'S-EYE VIEW. I JUST WANTED A CHANGE.
SO, WHAT'D YOU FIND OUT?
WELL, YOU'RE BALDING.
YOU COULD SEE THAT FROM THE GROUND.
YEAH, BUT THE AGE SPOTS ARE NEW TO ME.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

IN THE BOTTOM OF THE 9TH INNING, WE LEAVE THESE CHEAP SEATS AND BEGIN PLAN 'A'...
YOU MEAN TAKE EMPTY SEATS BEHIND HOME PLATE AFTER EVERYONE HAS LEFT EARLY BECAUSE WE'RE LOSING AND EAT THEIR LEFTOVER NACHOS?
YEP, REMEMBER: GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

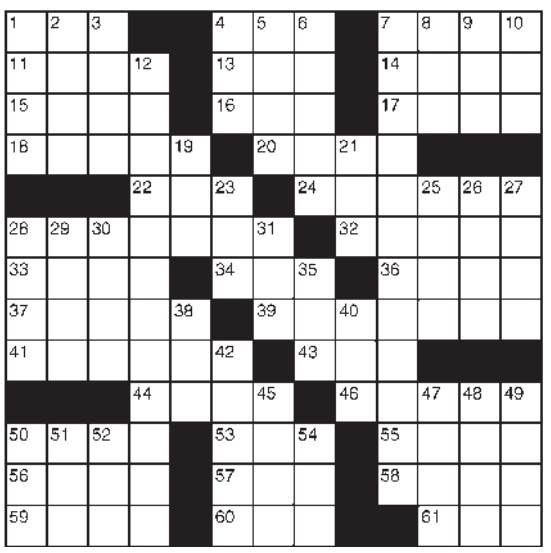
ACROSS
1 Suntan lotion letters
4 "Nova" airer
7 Couch
11 Head light?
13 Joan of —
14 La Scala solo
15 Norwegian saint
16 Carnival city
17 Forum wear
18 Hair dryer
20 Spelling or Amos
22 Cartoonist Chast
24 Soft hue
28 Flip out
32 Submit taxes on line
33 New York canal
34 Nuke in the microwave
36 Europe's neighbor
37 Really annoy
39 Sponges
41 Pizza servings
43 Newt
44 Catches some rays
46 Nepal's neighbor
50 Sandwich shop
53 $ dispenser
55 Sandwich cookie
56 Too
57 Sportage maker
58 "Just Do It" company
59 Subject, usually
60 Before
61 Spiritual leader?

DOWN
1 Attempt
2 — Alto
3 Imperfection
4 Standard
5 Telly watcher
6 Reporter's coup
7 Contentment
8 Granada gold
9 Pear-shaped fruit
10 Motorist's org.
12 Excessive response
19 Mauna —
21 "The Lovebirds" star Issa
23 Snoring, in comics
25 Mrs. Addams, to Gomez
26 Writer Wiesel
27 Meadows
28 Pop music's Bee —
29 Like some vaccines
30 New York's — Field
31 Thanksgiving veggie
35 "The Bells" author
38 Afternoon get-together
40 Frequently
42 Plumber's tool
45 Commotion
47 Party cheese
48 Comic shrieks
49 Low digits
50 Quarterback Marino
51 "Evil Woman" band
52 Baton Rouge sch.
54 Actress West

Solution time: 21 mins.

I	A	C	E	I		V	O	W		S	S	H
S	L	O	I	H		I	H	A		I	A	E
P	E	N	N	E		S	E	Y	M	O	U	R
		T	A	T	T	O	O		O	O	N	A
E	M	O		A	I	R		C	S	P	A	N
D	O	U	G		E	S	I	E	S			
U	P	R	O	A	R		S	E	E	G	E	R
			T	E	S	L	A		S	L	O	E
A	B	H	O	R		A	H	F		A	N	D
W	O	O	F		M	U	S	E	U	M		
C	A	B	C	O	U	R		S	H	O	O	T
U	R	B		E	T	A		T	O	U	A	S
L	D	S		D	E	S		S	H	R	E	K

Last Friday's answer 5-6



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Gabourey Sidibe, 41; George Clooney, 63; Tom Bergeron, 69; Willie Mays, 93.

Happy Birthday: Pay attention to detail this year. The little extras you apply to whatever you do will benefit others. Personal improvements and helping others are featured. Something will encourage you to make changes that allow you more time to take advantage of opportunities. Deal with responsibilities directly and swiftly to ensure you have time to do what makes you happy. Your numbers are 8, 12, 23, 29, 31, 38, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Channel your energy and finish what you start. Organization powered by insight and fortitude will help you avoid anyone trying to sidetrack you or get in your way. Don't take risks with your reputation, health or ability to earn a living. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Think before you take action. Consider the consequences and rectify a potential problem before it has time to morph into something too big to handle. Look for alternatives you can fall back on, and forge ahead. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Keep your feet firmly planted on the ground. Assess, think before you act and trust your instincts over what others try to convince you to believe. Stability comes from taking charge and focusing on your needs instead of letting others speak on your behalf. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Get organized and initiate your plans. Approach those you want to help and ask those you can rely on to pitch in for support. Be the force that pulls everyone together and gets things done. You'll be appreciated by those who count. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* You must be self-reliant and double-check information. Someone will confuse you by making an unexpected or last-minute change. Be prepared to use backup plans to ensure you get things done according to plan. Enforce guidelines and financial limits to offset anything or anyone who gets in your way. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* An open mind will collect plenty of information that can help you make better decisions. Embrace changes that offer a learning plan that suits your schedule and what you are trying to achieve. Bide your time and cover every angle. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Make your plans and schedule available to those who lean on you for help, and assign small jobs to those capable of helping. A partnership will require confirmation regarding who is responsible for what. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Participate in events or activities that spark your imagination and offer the chance to connect with people heading in a similar direction. Opportunity will be yours if you are open to suggestions and partnerships that can make your life easier. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Establish your priorities and put a feasible schedule in place. Stand by your word, and put your energy where it makes sense. Take advantage of every opportunity to appease someone's demands. Do what's necessary. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Size up situations, learn all you can and refrain from discussing your intentions prematurely. Delve into what interests you most, and implement changes that help you adjust your schedule, attitude and long-term plans to fit your dreams, hopes and wishes. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Be careful when dealing with domestic issues; not everyone will agree with your decisions. The less you share, the easier it will be to get things done your way. Let your heart and emotions lead the way. If you feel passionate about something, make it happen. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Pay attention to financial and domestic matters. Focus on details, and put your energy into running your home efficiently. Ask for help to ensure you bring about positive change. Put in the time and effort necessary to render a satisfactory result. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are ambitious, hardworking and opportunity-driven. You are dedicated and spontaneous.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

				6			2	
					7	6		
6	7		2	4	8		1	9
	4							
7	5	6					9	8
1		2		9		4		
8	2	4			5		3	1
5	6		1	3	9		8	
	1	9	4			5	7	

Difficulty: ★ 5/6

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer

8	6	4	7	9	2	5	3	1
5	9	2	1	3	6	4	8	7
3	1	7	5	4	8	6	9	2
2	4	3	6	8	9	1	7	5
9	5	1	3	2	7	8	4	6
7	8	6	4	1	5	9	2	3
6	3	5	8	7	4	2	1	9
4	7	9	2	6	1	3	5	8
1	2	8	9	5	3	7	6	4

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Difficulty: ★★★★ 5/3

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS Solution: 7 letters

A	D	A	M	A	N	D	E	V	E	S	R	A	T	S
I	B	I	B	L	E	O	H	O	A	R	A	H	P	U
S	A	R	S	S	D	U	O	L	C	B	E	I	E	N
R	B	N	A	A	L	E	S	M	A	A	R	A	E	S
A	E	O	G	H	A	N	S	N	V	I	R	F	H	H
E	L	A	R	E	A	C	I	E	T	T	I	C	S	I
L	I	H	A	R	L	M	N	G	H	S	A	L	I	N
U	G	S	S	B	A	A	N	U	H	T	E	I	N	E
F	H	A	S	L	M	I	N	D	T	T	N	O	S	W
I	T	R	S	U	N	I	N	L	Ⓨ	S	I	N	B	O
T	S	K	H	N	V	A	E	E	Ⓔ	W	M	A	O	B
U	E	D	I	E	L	A	H	W	Ⓑ	A	A	E	C	N
A	R	G	R	O	U	N	D	O	Ⓞ	L	F	C	A	I
E	E	S	A	B	B	A	T	H	P	E	S	O	J	A
B	E	N	J	A	M	I	N	O	I	G	I	L	E	R

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Abraham, Adam and Eve, Angel, Animals, Babel, Beautiful, Beginning, Benjamin, Bible, Cattle, Clouds, Earth, Famine, Fish, Flood, Grass, Ground, Heaven, Herb, Human, Isaac, Israel, Jacob, Joseph, Land, Laws, Light, Lion, Moon, Night, Noah's Ark, Obey, Ocean, Pharaoh, Rainbow, Religion, Rest, Sabbath, Sheep, Sins, Spirit, Stars, Sunshine, Universe, Whale

Last Friday's answer : Poem

The NEW Volume 77 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Edwards scores 43 points, Reid erupts in 4th to help T-Wolves beat Nuggets in Game 1

DENVER (AP) — Anthony Edwards' decision-making was as spot-on as his shot-making.

When he drew a crowd, he passed. When he was open, he shot—and usually swished.

Edwards scored a playoff career-high 43 points, Naz Reid had 14 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter and the Minnesota Timberwolves beat the defending NBA champion Denver Nuggets 106-99 in Game 1 of the second-round series Saturday night.

Edwards was unstoppable in the first half, scoring 25 points, and Reid took over in the fourth quarter. Karl-Anthony Towns had 20 points despite dealing with foul trouble. The Timberwolves shot a blistering 71.1% from the floor in the second half.

"The whole team, we trust each other," said Edwards, who was 17 of 29 from the floor. "It doesn't matter down the stretch who takes the shot."

All part of Edwards' evolution on the court.

AP

Minnesota Timberwolves guard Anthony Edwards, left, is congratulated by center Rudy Gobert as time runs out in the second half of Game 1 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series against the Denver Nuggets Saturday, May 4, 2024, in Denver

"I'm proud of the way he's accepted the kind of growth he needed to have to be where he is," said Conley, who finished with 14 points and 10 assists. "It's not easy for a 22-, 23-year-old to make that adjustment so quickly."

"Twenty-two," Edwards playfully chimed in.

Game 2 is Monday night in Denver.

Three days after undergoing knee surgery, Timberwolves coach Chris Finch was on the bench in the second row, next to the scorer's table and behind assistant coach Micah Nori, who did the instructing, roaming and switching. Finch ruptured the patellar tendon in his right knee last week when Wolves point guard Mike Conley collided with him late in Minnesota's Round 1 clincher at Phoenix.

"All the plays we scored on were my calls and the ones that we didn't were his," cracked Nori. "(Finch) was great. He was like, 'We don't want to make it clunky,' is the term he used. We did a good job of that."

Two-time NBA MVP Nikola Jokic had 32 points, eight rebounds and nine assists for Denver, but also had seven turnovers. Jamal Murray scored 17 points after being held scoreless in the first half. Murray, the hero for the Nuggets in Round 1 with a pair of game-winners that allowed Denver to eliminate the Lakers in five games, finished 6 of 14 from the floor.

"We need to do a better job of making them make tough shots, maybe make the extra pass," Jokic said.

Tied at 84, the Timberwolves went on an 18-7 run to break it open. Reid had 10 straight points for the Timberwolves at one point during the pivotal stretch. Reid was the beneficiary of the Nuggets making sure Edwards was constantly covered.

"When (Edwards) draws three people, he makes the right play all the time," Reid said. "I've seen him grow from Day 1 to where he is — a superstar in the making, if he's not now."

Last year, the Wolves were a tough first-round opponent for Denver despite being without Reid (broken wrist) and Jaden McDaniels (broken hand) and with Towns coming off a severe calf strain that had cost him 52 games. This time, not a single Timberwolves player was listed on the injury report.

"Going against the best player in the world is always fun," Edwards said about facing Jokic. "Going against the best team in the world is always fun."

Aside from being healthier, the Timberwolves were much better thanks to the dramatic improvement in Edwards' game, Denver coach Michael Malone suggested.

"There's no weaknesses in his game," Malone said. "And it's going to be a hell of a challenge trying to slow him down."

Especially when he has so much help.

"Naz Reid got going. Karl-Anthony Towns got going. Mike Conley got going — where Anthony Edwards carried the day in that first half," Malone said. "But the second half I just felt not nearly enough discipline and physicality and they were able to get whatever they wanted."

Lue says he wants to keep coaching Clippers, passes on addressing speculation over Lakers

DALLAS (AP)—Tyronn Lue said he wants to be coach of the Los Angeles Clippers for the longterm and declined to address directly speculation that the Lakers would target him in their search after firing Darvin Ham.

Lue was asked about his future and the talk of the Lakers after Dallas ended the Clippers season with a 114-101 victory in Game 6 of a first-round series Friday night.

"I don't really have a comment on that," Lue said when asked about his name surfacing in the Lakers' search. "It's great to be wanted. That's a really good feeling. Like I said, I want to be here. Hopefully, we're able to solidify that."

Speaking to reporters in the final minutes of his 47th birthday after a late-night finish, Lue said he felt strong support from owner Steve Ballmer and team president Lawrence Frank among others.

Lue has two years remaining on his contract, and ESPN, citing anonymous sources, reported that the Clippers are interested in an extension.

"I didn't come in to bounce around, go all over the place," Lue said. "They've all been great to me. Just having a great relationship with the owner, with the front office. It's great. I would love to be here longterm."

The Clippers were without star forward Kawhi Leonard in four of the six games against the Mavericks with right knee inflammation. He missed three of five games in a first-round loss to Phoenix last year.

"I give our guys credit for just sticking with it through all the ups and downs and all the negative scrutiny and all the things that they went through this season," Lue said. "Having to go into a series again short-handed."

Lue coached Cleveland to the 2016 NBA title with LeBron James, who left for the Lakers in free agency two years later. Lue was gone just six games—all losses—into the season after James' departure from the Cavaliers.

Lue was an assistant on Doc Rivers' staff with the Clippers before taking over when Rivers and the club mutually parted ways following the 2019-20 season. Rivers ended up in Philadelphia.

The Clippers reached the Western Conference finals in Lue's first season and have a 184-134 record in the regular season under him.

Leonard is under contract in 2024-25, and fellow All-Star Paul George has a player option. James Harden, a 10-time All-Star added in an early-season trade, is a free agent.

"This was a good year," Lue said. "Overall, I wouldn't trade it for anything, outside the early ending. I like the guys in the locker room. They respect me. I respect them. I'm ready to move on to next season and get better."

Lakers fire coach Darvin Ham after just 2 seasons in charge and 1st-round playoff exit

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Los Angeles Lakers fired coach Darvin Ham on Friday after just two seasons in charge.

The Lakers announced on social media that they were dismissing Ham four days after their season ended with a first-round playoff loss to Denver in five games.

Ham led Los Angeles to the Western Conference finals less than a year ago in his first season as an NBA head coach. He had replaced Frank Vogel, who was fired by the Lakers exactly 18 months after winning the franchise's 17th championship in 2020.

Ham had two winning seasons and made two playoff appearances, but that's not enough with the championship-focused Lakers. With little time left to capitalize on the concurrent presence of Anthony Davis and 39-year-old LeBron James — who hasn't decided whether to return for his 22nd NBA season — the Lakers are resetting their coaching staff once again instead of blaming general manager Rob Pelinka for his roster construction.

"We greatly appreciate Darvin's efforts on behalf of the Lakers and recognize the many accomplishments achieved over the past two seasons, including last year's remarkable run to the Western Conference finals," Pelinka said in a statement. "We all want to thank Darvin for his dedication and positivity. While this was a difficult decision to make, it is the best course of action following a full review of the season. This organization will remain unwavering in its commitment to deliver championship-caliber basketball to Lakers fans around the world."

Ham presided over a disappointing year for the Lakers, who went 47-35 in the regular season and won the NBA's inaugural In-Season Tournament. The Lakers then beat New Orleans in a play-in game to move up to the seventh seed in the highly competitive Western Conference—but that meant they had to face Denver, which swept them out of the playoffs last season.

Los Angeles led the defending champion Nuggets for long stretches of their first-round series, but Nikola Jokic and his teammates eventually rolled into the second round with a series of comeback wins.

"Sitting in this seat, it's been a hell of a two years," Ham said after the game. "A lot of good things that got done, but ultimately, you want to win that ultimate prize."

The Lakers' failure stung because James and Davis were largely healthy all year long, with both superstars playing more games than they had managed in an NBA season since 2017-18—76 for Davis and 71 for James, the leading scorer in NBA history. D'Angelo Russell also had a strong regular season, setting the franchise record for 3-pointers.

That health and success only translated into a four-win improvement in the standings from last season, and Ham received much of the blame from fans and observers for his game management, slow tactical adjustments and a reluctance to change his player rotations and starting lineups, even when things weren't working.

The Lakers fell into a hole they couldn't escape when they went 3-10 during the holiday period immediately after the In-Season Tournament finale. Ham was widely criticized for his lineups and rotations during that poor stretch—among other decisions, he curiously benched Russell and Austin Reaves while giving extensive playing time to Taurean Prince and Cam Reddish.

That slump eventually prevented the Lakers from landing a top-6 seed in the West even though they finished the regular season on an impressive 28-14 surge.

The players publicly backed Ham, but signs of frustration were clear. After the Lakers blew a 20-point lead and lost to Denver in Game 2 last month, Davis said the Lakers "have stretches where we don't know what we're doing on both ends of the floor," a comment widely interpreted as a shot at Ham's coaching competence.

The Lakers only went 43-39 in their first season under Ham in 2022-23, but they capitalized on more favorable playoff matchups. After beating Minnesota in a play-in game, they won playoff series against Memphis and Golden State to reach the conference finals, where they were swept by Denver.

James, Davis and the Lakers have failed to win a playoff round in three of their four seasons since winning the 2020 championship in the Florida bubble.

Ham had two years left on his contract with the Lakers, who will be hiring their fourth head coach since James arrived in 2018. The new coach will be the Lakers' eighth in 14 seasons since Hall of Famer Phil Jackson's departure in 2011.

Twins extend win streak to 12 with a 3-1 win over the Red Sox

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Pablo López struck out eight in six strong innings, Max Kepler homered and the Minnesota Twins extended their winning streak to 12 games with a 3-1 win over the Boston Red Sox on Saturday.

The Twins have the longest winning streak in the majors this season. Minnesota's run matches the team's winning streak from the late 1980s, which is the second-longest in Twins history. The club record for consecutive wins in 15, from June 1991, which is the last season Minnesota won the World Series.

Kepler and Willi Castro each had two hits, Carlos Correa had two RBIs and Cole Sands pitched a scoreless final inning for his second save.

Wilyer Abreu and Dominic Smith had two hits apiece for Boston, which has lost three straight games.

Kepler homered off Cam Booser (0-1) in the fourth inning. Booser was the third of five pitchers used in a bullpen game.

AP

Members of the Minnesota Twins celebrate their team's win over the Boston Red Sox in a baseball game, Saturday, May 4, 2024, in Minneapolis.

YANKEES 5, TIGERS 3

NEW YORK (AP)—Aaron Judge was ejected for the first time in his career in the seventh inning, Anthony Rizzo hit a three-run homer to cap a four-run third and New York beat Detroit.

Judge had two hits, including an RBI double to start New York's rally in the third before getting ejected by plate umpire Ryan Blakney for arguing a called third strike. Judge thought a full count fastball by Tyler Holton was slightly outside and he was quickly tossed after looking back at Blakney.

Rizzo followed up his game-winning single by hitting a drive off Casey Mize (1-1) that banked off the side facing of the second deck in right field and caromed into the "Judge's Chambers" to give New York a 5-1 lead.

CUBS 6, BREWERS 5

CHICAGO (AP)—Nico Hoerner hit his first career leadoff home run, Christopher Morel hit his third homer in as many games and Patrick Wisdom sent one into the stands as the Chicago beat Milwaukee.

Chicago tied its first divisional series of the year at one apiece in manager Craig Counsell's first series against his former team. Brewers manager Pat Murphy also returned to the dugout after serving a two-game suspension for his role in a brawl with Tampa Bay on Tuesday.

Milwaukee came within one twice late in the game. When Chicago's Keegan Thompson replaced starter Jameson Taillon (3-0), up 4-0 after six strong innings, he walked Rhys Hoskins. Then Oliver Dunn hit a triple that sent Hoskins home. Blake Perkins homered the next at-bat.

Jackson Chourio singled before Counsell brought in Mark Leiter Jr. Sal Frelick then doubled on a ground ball to Mike Tauchman who tossed Dansby Swanson a tough throw he couldn't collect. Chourio rounded the bases on the error, making the score 4-5.

PIRATES 1, ROCKIES 0

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Pinch-hitter Jack Suwinski singled home Connor Joe with two outs in the ninth inning to lift Pittsburgh to a victory over Colorado.

Joe led off the ninth against Nick Mears (0-3) with a single and eventually moved to third after walks to Jared Triolo and Oneil Cruz. Suwinski followed with a single to left as the Pirates snapped a five-game losing streak.

Jared Jones, Colin Holderman and David Bednar (2-2) combined for a one-hitter as the Pirates won for just the fourth time in their last 18 games. The Rockies managed just one baserunner, a double by Elias Diaz leading off the fifth.

The 22-year-old Jones has been a revelation during the season's opening weeks, dominating opponents with a fastball that can reach triple digits offset by a slider and change-up that can leave opponents guessing.

BLUE JAYS 6, NATIONALS 3

WASHINGTON (AP)—Kevin Gausman pitched 5 1/3 scoreless innings, Kevin Kiermaier hit a two-run homer in his return from the injured list and Toronto beat Washington to end a three-game losing streak.

Gausman (2-3) allowed three hits while striking out eight. He walked two batters in the first inning, but settled in and later retired 10 straight—seven by strikeout—before leaving after Luis García Jr.'s one-out single in the sixth.

Gausman has given up two earned runs in 24 innings while striking out 21 with five walks over his last four starts.

Danny Jansen and Daulton Varsho each had two hits for the Blue Jays, who had lost eight of 11. Kiermaier returned after missing nine games with left hip flexor inflammation and connected off Derek Law in the eighth inning for his first homer of the season.

CJ Abrams and García had two hits each for the Nationals, who had won six of eight and missed a chance to for a winning record for the first time since July 1, 2021 when they were 40-39.

GUARDIANS 7, ANGELS 1

CLEVELAND (AP)—Bo Naylor hit his first career grand slam, Austin Hedges had his first homer since June 14 and Cleveland beat Los Angeles.

Naylor's two-out blast in the sixth inning came off Angels starter Reid Detmers (3-3), who had loaded the bases on three walks. The four RBIs were a career high for the third-year catcher.

Hedges, batting .111 on the season, hit a two-run homer in the second. Ramón Laureano added a solo shot in the fourth for the Guardians, who have the second-best record in the American League at 21-12.

Cleveland left fielder Steven Kwan, who leads the AL with a .353 batting average, left the game after the third inning because of left hamstring tightness.

WHITE SOX 6, CARDINALS 5, 10 INNINGS

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Tanner Banks came on after a three-hour rain delay to strike out pinch-hitter Iván Herrera in the bottom of the 10th inning, and Chicago beat St. Louis to snap a four-game losing streak.

Tommy Pham drove in the go-ahead run with a single in the top of the 10th and the White Sox were an out away in the bottom half when crew chief Dan Iassogna stopped play and called out the grounds crew after John Brebbia threw his first pitch to Nolan Gorman.

After the delay of 3 hours, 3 minutes, Banks came on and threw four pitches to get Herrera for his first save of the season.

Nolan Arenado singled to first to lead off the bottom of the 10th, and Alec Burleson reached first base on a fielder's choice to load the bases. Brebbia then struck out Lars Nootbaar and Masyn Winn, who was batting when the downpour began.

ORIOLES 2, REDS 1

CINCINNATI (AP)—John Means pitched seven shutout innings in his season debut and Baltimore beat Cincinnati.

Means (1-0) underwent season-ending Tommy John surgery on April 27, 2022. He returned to make four starts last September before landing back on the IL with a left forearm strain to begin this season. Means made six rehab starts for Triple-A Norfolk before being reinstated on May 1.

The Orioles have won five of their past six games.

Like Cole Irvin the night before, Means kept Reds batters off balance with no walks and eight strikeouts.

A pair of solo home runs off Reds starter Andrew Abbott (1-4) gave the Orioles a 2-0 lead.

MARINERS 5, ASTROS 0

HOUSTON (AP)—Logan Gilbert threw eight dominant innings, Luis Urías and Cal Raleigh homered and Seattle beat Houston.

Gilbert (3-0) allowed two hits and four walks and struck out six. He has allowed two runs or fewer in six of his seven starts. The right-hander retired 16 of 17 at one point.

Urías hit a solo home run to center to lead off the fifth, and Raleigh added a two-run shot to left center in the sixth. Mitch Garver had an RBI double in the fourth, and Ty France scored on Raleigh's double-play groundout in the second.

RAYS 3, METS 1

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—Pinch hitter Austin Shenton's bases-loaded walk scored a tiebreaking run in the eighth inning and Tampa Bay beat New York.

Adam Ottavino (1-1) was on the verge of getting out of a bases-loaded jam with one out in the eighth after shortstop Francisco Lindor made a leaping throw to home for a force-out at the plate on Randy Arozarena's high hopper.

However, Shenton walked to complete a nine-pitch plate appearance before José Caballero drew a free pass from Sean Reid-Foley to make it 3-1.

Jason Adam (2-0) worked out of a two-on, two-out jam in the eighth before Phil Maton worked the ninth for his first save.

Rays manager Kevin Cash won his 755th game, moving past Joe Maddon for the most wins in team history.

RANGERS 15, ROYALS 4

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Nathaniel Lowe had four hits and two RBIs, and Texas beat Kansas City.

Lowe went 4 for 6 one night after going hitless in four at bats in Texas' 7-1 loss on Friday. It was his first four-hit game since last July 14.

Adolis García, Evan Carter and Travis Jankowski also drove in two runs each. Carter scored on a wild pitch after a two-run triple in the third inning. Garcia extended his hitting streak to six games, and Carter had two hits to extend his hit streak to five games.

The Rangers totaled a season-high 17 hits and set a season-high in runs against the team entering the game with the highest run differential in the majors.

Texas had three three-run innings and a five-run ninth to hand Kansas City its worst loss of the season. Two-runs scored on a wild pitch by Colin Selby and a throwing error to third base on the same play to cap a three-run seventh. Joe Smith, Jankowski, Marcus Semien, Leody Taveras and Ezequiel Duran had RBIs in the ninth.

ATHLETICS 20, MARLINS 4

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Brent Rooker became the first Oakland player in nearly 30 years to homer twice in an inning, accomplishing the feat in the third inning to help them pound Miami for their sixth consecutive victory.

The Athletics only All-Star a year ago, Rooker drilled a two-run drive off Marlins starter Trevor Rogers (0-5), then added a three-run shot off Darren McCaughan in the 10-run inning. Oakland set season highs for runs and hits with 21.

Rooker, who also singled in the sixth, is the 60th player in major league history to homer twice in an inning. Trea Turner of Philadelphia was the most recent to do it, reaching the milestone Aug. 19. The last A's player to do it was Mark McGwire against Seattle in 1996.

Brett Harris also homered twice for Oakland, a day after making his major league debut. The home runs were Harris' first hits in the majors. JJ Bleday and Shea Langeliers added three-run home runs in the game delayed nearly 3 1/2 hours by rain.

PHILLIES 14, GIANTS 3

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Ranger Suárez pitched six strong innings, Whit Merrifield homered and streaking Philadelphia routed San Francisco.

Kyle Schwarber, Johan Rojas and Bryson Stott each drove in two runs, and every starter had at least one hit for Philadelphia. The Phillies have won 15 of 18, and their 23 victories are the most in the majors.

The win was dampened a bit by news prior to the contest that shortstop Trea Turner will miss at least six weeks with a left hamstring strain. And third baseman Alec Bohm departed in the third inning due to left hip tightness that occurred during his second-inning at-bat when he extended his hitting streak to 17 consecutive games with a single.

Wilmer Flores homered for the Giants, who have lost five of seven.

Kids' Athletics Day tomorrow; #WorldMileChallenge until May 19

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Join Northern Marianas Athletics in celebrating 2024 World Athletics Kids' Athletics Day tomorrow, May 7, 5pm at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field and also join the #WorldMileChallenge from May 1-19.

The events for Kids' Athletics Day are kids' athletics, relays, and a 4-minute race clock challenge to see how far you can run in four minutes.

World Athletics, according to NMA, is launching the challenge ahead of this year's Kids' Athletics Day, which is an annual celebration of children and young people being active and participating in athletics.

There is no minimum age limit to join the challenge, however, all entrants 10 years and under must be accompanied by a registered parent/guardian for the entire duration of the race, and the accompanying adult takes full responsibility for the safety of the entrant.

"In honor of the 70th anniversary of Roger Bannister breaking the four-minute mile on May 6, 1954, this year's focus is on running, jogging or walking a mile. We are aiming to 'Run the World' one mile at a time," said NMA on their registration website at https://raceroster.com/events/2024/88976/world-mile-challenge-2024.

Use the hashtags #WorldMileChallenge and #KidsAthleticsDay and tag @nmiathletics and https://www.facebook.com/WorldAthletics to share your initiatives/events by posting pictures/videos.

GCA

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lofa's attacks at the basket, and they continued their rampage as they ended the first half, 20-4.

DMS tried their hardest to catch up, but the gap was just too big to bridge. The only other basket made by the Tottots through a tough GCA defense was Sireane Deleon Guerrero. Other than that, they were held in limbo as they were reduced to just 6 points throughout the game.

In the end, all DMS could do was take all the shots they could, but failed to yield results against a formidable GCA team. Fatialofa scored the majority of GCA's points with 17, while Camacho had 7 markers, and Aiyanah Fatialofa contributed four.

With the Fatialofa sisters and Camacho on GCA's roster were Jessica Kwak, Wylynn Pua, Anne Gabrielle Arriola, Remelene Diaz, Zoey Kwak, Amy Park, Alice Moon and Joanella Yarofalir.

GCA's head coach Fred Fatialofa was off-island, so his assistant coaches Azriel Fatialofa and Trevor Repp were interviewed by the media after the game.

Repp said of their performance, "They played really well as a team. Lots of heart and they really persevered and played well the whole season."

Aaleyah and Aiyanah's older sister, Azriel said of her sisters' performance, "I'm honestly really proud of them. Obviously as sisters, they already have that chemistry and they connect already. So with them winning this championship, I'm really proud as a big sister."

As for their undefeated season, Repp said, "They were undefeated and they really improved throughout the season as well." The final five of their team are promoting to high school but Repp said of the players left behind, "I believe in them. The younger players are going to do good and we'll be able to have a good team next year."

He then thanked everyone at GCA for coming out to support the team during their games.

GCA 28 – Aaleyah Fatialofa 17, Camacho 7, Aiyanah Fatialofa 4.

DMS 6 – Yamada 2, Zandueta 2, Deleon Guerrero 2.

Scoring by halves: 20-4, 28-6.

LEIGH GASES
Champions Grace Christian Academy's middle school girls basketball team poses for a group photo during the awards ceremony of the IT&E Interscholastic Girls Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

PERFECT

From page 16

off and get on board but SIS kept the momentum going along with their tight-knit defense. As a result, HMS were still scoreless while Jebro Leon made it 2-nil in the 43rd minute.

HMS couldn't even get a breather when Leon rushed the goal and found another opening to quickly make it 3-0 just three minutes later. Then, towards the end of regulation, Landon Springer scored their last goal in the 50th minute for a huge 4-0 lead—which eventually became the final score.

Namai-Scoggins and Springer led the season with their 14 goals apiece and won the Golden Boot Award, while Springer won the most valuable player award for his skill, efficiency, and consistency on the pitch.

With Namai-Scoggins, Springer, and Leon on SIS' roster were Bentley Castro, JinHyun Choi, William Guo, Wilson Guo, Matthew Hwang, Quido Jambor, Theo Joab, Yutaro Kitagawa, Dean Newman, Landon Pudney, Jude Rayphand, and Keoni Ruszala.

After the finals, SIS coach Casey Chambers said that the season was great. Last season, they were the runner up against a strong Tanapag Middle School team, but this season, they bounced back with an undefeated record.

About their game against HMS, he said, "We knew that their keeper likes to send the long ball, so I let the defense be very aware of that. Also with attacking, we sent a lot of cross plays because with the height like with Springer."

As for how the explosion of goals came toward the last minutes of the game, he said, "I could tell that Hopwood was slowing a little bit down, and we needed to pump it up, so eventually we got the four goals in and it made us happy."

He said that the majority of the SIS team are promoting to high school, but that "the seventh and sixth graders are still really good so I'm excited to see what's going to happen next year."

On the difference of their team this season compared to last, Chambers said that they knew how it was like to lose in the final stage. "I could just tell that they wanted to win this year and they remembered what happened, so they were just like, 'alright, let's win it,'" he said.

LEIGH GASES
Saipan International School's Taiga Namai-Scoggins, left, and Landon Springer pose with the Golden Boot award after both scored the most goals of 14 throughout the 2023-2024 NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Boys Middle School Soccer League.

Springer, on winning both the MVP and Golden Boot award, said, "This is surprising. I didn't expect myself to achieve this, but I owe it all to my team, I wouldn't have gotten it without them."

With their game, he said that it was nerve-racking in the beginning but as the game went on, he got used to it and kept his focus. The 14-year-old said that as he scored the last goal, he felt happy. "I felt a lot of pressure at the moment but I was able to execute," he said.

Earlier in the third-place game, Mount Carmel School Knights defeated Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, 3-1.

ALEKENSKO

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years and I have never known a swimmer who practiced as much as Isaiah and worked as hard as Isaiah. There is no reason why a young man who has worked hardest cannot have a bright future. He embodied it perfectly," he said.

Kimura and his wife, Yuko who is Tsunami Saipan's manager, said they've essentially treated Aleksenko like their own son.

"Me and my wife Yuko have raised Isaiah with lots of love. That's why we scolded him so much that it made him tremble and we loved him so much. For 13 years, we've been raising him as his second parents (though I don't know how he feels about it)."

Kimura believes his ward will be able to develop his full potential as he will get to train in better facilities—the very least a 50m swimming pool—and access to better coaching in college in the U.S. mainland.

"I heard that the Keiser swim team has a great coach. They also have a great practice environment with a 50m long course pool. Florida is also warm throughout the year and I think it's a very suitable environment for Saipan kids. I believe Isaiah's goal is to compete in the U.S. Olympic Trials/U.S. National Championships. Dream big! Joining Team USA!" he said.

Keiser University men's and women's swimming and diving head coach Adam Epstein believes they might have unearthed a diamond in the rough in Aleksenko, who won two bronze medals in the recent the 47th Junior Olympic Cup in Japan and a gold medal in the 200m butterfly and was part of the bronze medal-winning 4x100m individual medley and 4x100m relay team in last year's Pacific Games in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

"Isaiah is a hidden gem of a talent and he has the skill set to help us compete for a team national title. Isaiah has extremely strong underwaters when he swims the butterfly. Due to lack of facilities, we believe that he can improve significantly with his starts and the details of our sport," he said.

Epstein added that other than a 50-meter pool helping him train for his international goals, Isaiah will have other world-class athletes to train with while getting a great education at Keiser University.

"The sky is the limit for Isaiah as he continues to grow and mature into his body. There is a massive emphasis in strength at the collegiate level that will help Isaiah continue to progress in his career."

Aleksenko seems deadest in etching his name in CNMI sports lore as he prepares for the next chapter of his swimming journey in college.

"I won't ever forget about Saipan and I'll make sure to make Saipan known once I become famous!" he said.

Edwards scores 43 points, Reid erupts in 4th to help T-Wolves beat Nuggets in Game 1

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Twins extend win streak to 12 with a 3-1 win over the Red Sox

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Isaiah Alekensko poses with Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center head coach Hiroyuki Kimura, right, and Tsunami Saipan manager Yuko Kimura after a recent training session.

Alekensko will take his talents to Keiser University

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

Isaiah Alekensko will continue his swimming exploits at Keiser University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Dubbed the Seahawks, Keiser University competes in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics' Sun Conference (formerly known as the Florida Sun Conference).

The 17-year-old Marianas High School senior will be taking up engineering at Keiser University.

"I chose Keiser University because the coach was really nice and easy to talk to unlike the other coaches. He was very friendly and understanding. I will be majoring in engineering. One of my expectations is to definitely go to the Olympics and in the future get medals," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Other schools he considered before narrowing it down to Keiser University were Miami University and Utah University.

Alekensko admitted that he won't be going to Keiser University on a full-ride scholarship.

"It unfortunately wasn't a full-ride scholarship because my grades in high school were bad and honestly, I didn't even make the GPA to get in that school, but they still took me in with large amounts of scholarships. I know that in my second year, I would definitely get a full scholarship because I compared my time to theirs and my time is the fastest time out of their butterfly times," said the Saipan Community School alumnus.

Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center head coach Hiroyuki Kimura said he couldn't be happier that Alekensko will continue to pursue swimming in college.

"I cried tears of happiness when I heard that Isaiah had gotten a swimming scholarship and was going to university. The reason for my tears is that I have been watching Saipan's swimming scene for over 20

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Perfect SIS blanks HMS 1 for boys title

LEIGH GASES

Saipan International School Geckos' boys middle school soccer team poses with their championship trophy and medals during the awards ceremony of the 2023-2024 NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Boys Middle School Soccer League during their finals at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Thursday.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The perfect Saipan International School Geckos blanked Hopwood Middle School Hilitais, 4-0, in the finals to win the championship of the 2023-2024 NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Boys Middle School Soccer League last Thursday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

The onslaught of goals didn't come until the second half as the Geckos finally found their stride and broke down the Hilitais' defenses.

While the first half was a quiet one for both teams, the second half for the Geckos was anything but. Taiga Namai-Scoggins found an opening and started the flood of goals for SIS as he scored in the 28th minute.

HMS tried to fend them

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LEIGH GASES

Saipan International School's Landon Springer, who was named the MVP, puts up four fingers in celebration after he scored his team's fourth goal in their finals game against Hopwood Middle School in the 2023-2024 NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Boys Middle School Soccer League during their finals at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Thursday.

Undefeated GCA caps girls MS hoops with title

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The Grace Christian Academy Lady Eagles swept the season and capped it off with the championship title in the IT&E Interscholastic Girls Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Lady Eagles overpowered the exhausted Dandan Middle School Tottots, 28-6. The Tottots had a tough morning as they battled their way to the finals and by the time they got there, exhaustion set in.

As a result, the fresh GCA squad came out of the starting whistle with a run and immediately got to work. Aaleyah Fatialofa used her range and height as she traversed easily through the court. Seamlessly, Fatialofa put up back-to-back points before DMS could even catch up.

Fatialofa scored 10 back-to-back points, while only 4 points were scored by DMS' Shaenna Yamada and Rhodalyn Zandueta. Nevaeh Camacho then scored a 3-pointer in between Fatia-

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LEIGH GASES

Grace Christian Academy's Nevaeh Camacho goes up for a layup during their finals game against Dandan Middle School in the IT&E Interscholastic Girls Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.